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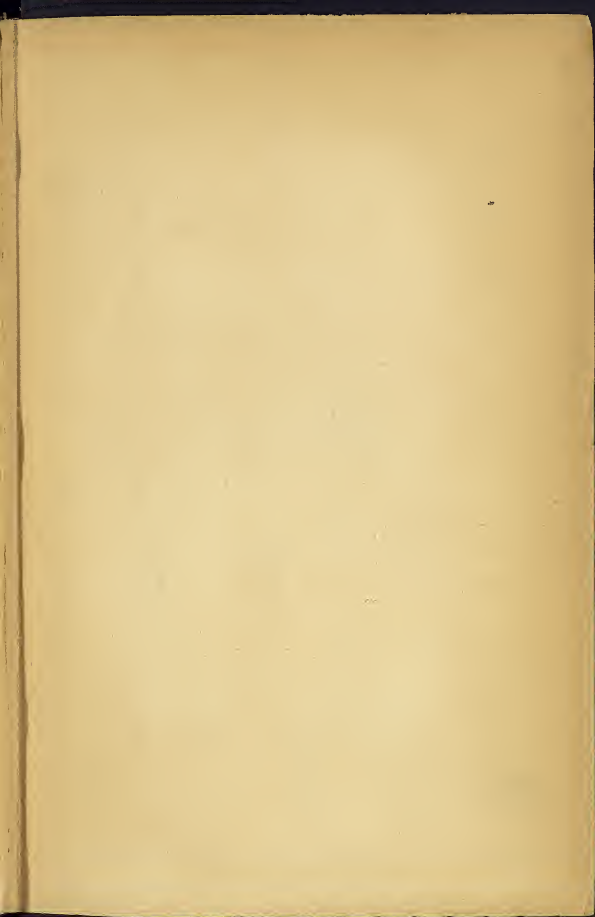
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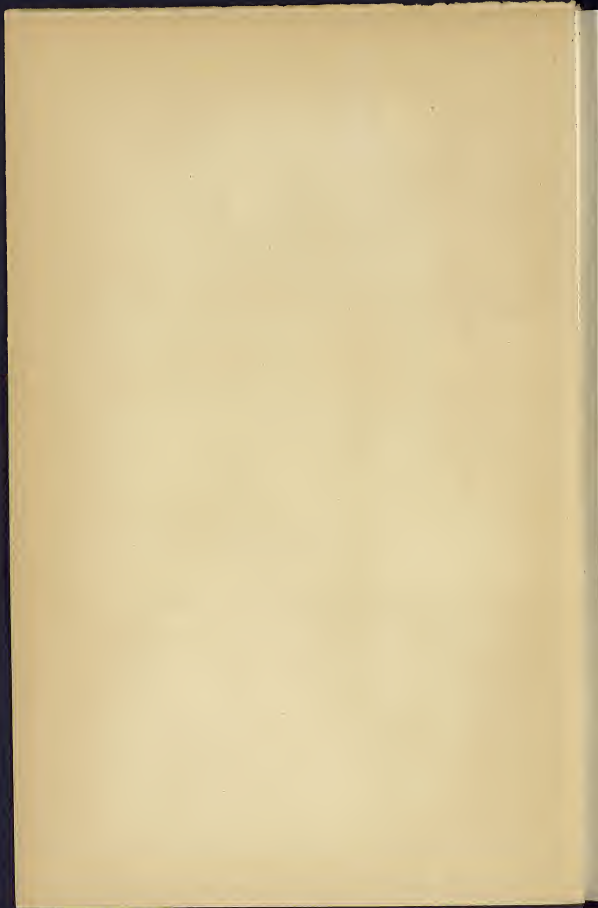


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VOL. XXXIX.

THE BARHAM PAPERS

VOL. III.







THE RIGHT HON. LORD BARHAM.
ADMIRAL OF THE RED SQUADRON.

LETTERS AND PAPERS
OF
Charles, Lord Barham

ADMIRAL OF THE RED SQUADRON

1758-1813

EDITED BY
SIR JOHN KNOX LAUGHTON, M.A., D.LITT.

HON. FELLOW OF CAIUS COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE
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VOL. III



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INTRODUCTION

THE Second Volume of the 'Barham Papers' ended with the retirement of Sir Charles Middleton from the Admiralty, consequent on a difference with the First Lord as to the propriety of recalling Sir John Laforey from the command at the Leeward Islands. From the letters there printed, it appeared that this recall was, in some way, connected with the quarrel between Laforey and Vice-Admiral Thompson. The few letters relating to the same subject, which are here given (pp. 5-9), do not confirm this, but imply that the cause was much more commonplace—the working of private interest of which Lord Spencer had been made the tool. It is clear too that, as concerned Middleton, this was only the climax of a long-felt sense of injury, a sense that he had not been treated with the consideration which his age and official experience entitled him to expect.

On resigning his position at the Admiralty, Middleton was appointed chairman of the Commission to enquire into the Civil Affairs of the

Navy, and continued to act in that capacity for several years. With him was nominated John Fordyce, a banker who, though at the time a man of considerable importance in the financial world, has left few traces behind, and little seems to be known about him beyond what was summarised in the debate in the House of Commons¹ (19th March 1805), on the motion of Mr. Creevey for a committee to enquire into the conduct of the Treasury and of Mr. Fordyce in relation to a large sum (£82,000) said to be due by Fordyce to the Treasury. From this it appears that, for some years previous to 1783, Fordyce had been 'Receiver General of the Land and other Taxes for Scotland'; that in 1783, consequent on his accounts being then in arrears to the amount of £90,000, the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Lord John Cavendish) had removed him from the office, not as deeming him 'unworthy to be trusted' but as 'declining to employ him in a situation connected with the revenue'—which, if it has any meaning at all, must imply that while there was no aspersion on his honesty, there was much on his judgment and discretion. It was explicitly said that 'the arrear of Mr. Fordyce was occasioned by the successive failures of three different agents employed by him for the purpose of paying into the Exchequer the taxes remitted from Scotland, and not from any diversion or misapplication of the public money by the receiver.' With the further details of this matter, however, we are

¹ Hansard, vol. iv. pp. 48 and xxxv.

not here concerned. What we are concerned with is the fact that shortly after his dismissal from the office of receiver, Fordyce was appointed to assist Middleton, at that time comptroller, in preparing a digest of the work in the navy office and in the dockyards. In this collaboration, Middleton formed a high idea of his business capacity, which was strengthened when he was again associated with him on the commission of Enquiry into the State of the Woods and Forests. The association was renewed in 1804, on the commission for Revising and Digesting the Civil Affairs of the Navy ; as to which it was distinctly said by the Secretary for War (William Dundas) that ' Sir Charles Middleton had refused to undertake the task entrusted to this commission unless Mr. Fordyce were also appointed on it ; and this, from the opinion Sir Charles had formed of the talents and capacity of Mr. Fordyce in a former service in which he had been associated with him.'¹ In this relation, there are many letters from Fordyce, none of which it has seemed necessary to print. To a great extent they deal with private matters, or with details of the work of the commission which has now scarcely a slender interest. There is only one from Middleton, printed on p. 12 from a rough draft, as a curious foreboding of evil in the Mediterranean. While Nelson, knowing—perhaps feeling—the relative value of the English and the French fleets, was writing to Lord Spencer and Lord St. Vincent that he would ' bring the

¹ Hansard, vol. iv. p. 59.

French fleet to action the moment he could lay his hands on them,' and to Lady Nelson that 'it would have been his delight to have tried Bonaparte on a wind,'¹ Middleton, at home and judging merely by the material force, was praying that 'he—Nelson—might not meet the French fleet at sea.'

After his quarrel with Lord Spencer in November 1795, Middleton's knowledge of naval politics could only be such as filtered to him through his nephew, James Gambier, who had remained at the admiralty (pp. 5-6), and there have been ribald but capable seamen who questioned Gambier's ability and judgment.

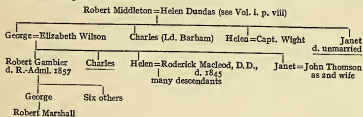
But Middleton had been so long and directly connected with the administration of the navy, as comptroller and as first sea lord, that it was difficult for him, and apparently more difficult for other people, to realise that in 1798 he had no special knowledge and no authority whatever. It is only by evoking the memory of this, that we can account for or explain the curious appeal on p. 9. Clearly the writer, who was not improbably a retired naval officer, thought that Middleton could do something to meet the crisis he described. Under the administration of Lord Spencer, or afterwards of Lord St. Vincent, Middleton could not and did not attempt to interfere. There is no trace of any correspondence with either of them, and we can readily understand that any offer of advice to St. Vincent would

¹ Nicolas, iii. 31-2, 45.

have met with a reception even ruder than that offered to Howe.

It was not till the formation of the Pitt ministry (May 1804) and the appointment of Henry Dundas, now Lord Melville, as First Lord, that Middleton became—though only indirectly—again connected with the admiralty. Melville was first cousin of Middleton's mother; but though thus of the earlier generation, was the younger by fourteen years. When Pitt formed his first ministry in 1783, Dundas was appointed treasurer of the navy, in which capacity he must have often met Middleton, not only as cousin but as comptroller, and have learned to look on him as the embodiment of naval wisdom. After seventeen years as treasurer of the navy, he could not be a stranger to admiralty business; but it would seem that he had accustomed himself to lean on Middleton, and when he now took office, it was agreed between him and Pitt that he was to be guided very much by Middleton's advice. So at least we are told by Mr.—afterwards Sir J. D.—Thomson (p. 273), a connection,¹

¹ Thomson's father married, as his second wife, Janet, Middleton's niece. Her grand-nephew, Mr. Robert Marshall Middleton, has kindly supplied some family notes, from which the following is extracted.



a personal friend and, for many years, Middleton's private secretary ; and the statement seems corroborated by the 'Memoranda of Advice' (pp. 24-39) as well as by the later Memoranda (pp. 40, 59), which, though signed by Melville, seem to owe their inspiration very directly to Middleton. For the time it lasted, Melville's administration was not unsatisfactory ; but in April 1805, a blow, as singular as it was unexpected, fell on him. He was charged with malversation of public money during his tenure of office as treasurer.

When the Commission of Enquiry into Abuses in the Navy¹ reported (13th February 1805) on 'The Office of Treasurer,'² and showed that during the years when Mr. Dundas held the office, gross irregularities had been committed, further enquiry could not have been avoided. But when, on 8th April, the House of Commons took the matter up, it discussed it with the heat of party politics rather than with the calmness required in searching for truth. The impeachment which followed on ten several charges³ of having applied to his private use and profit divers sums of public money entrusted to him in the capacity of treasurer of the navy, was treated as largely a party question, and his acquittal was mainly a party victory, which carried conviction to no one.

¹ Cf. *Correspondence of Admiral John Markham* (N.R.S., vol. xxviii), pp. ix, 11-15.

² The Reports of the Commission, with the evidence on which they were based, were published as Parliamentary Papers. There is a complete set in the Library of the R. United Service Institution. The Reports, alone, are in Hansard.

³ These charges are given at length in *Annual Register*, 1806, p. 115.

Even now, the 'misappropriation' of money and the trial are generally referred to in a spirit of violent hostility or equally violent partisanship. It is certain that there had been serious irregularities, serious breaches of the law, and that Dundas had sanctioned them; but whether inadvertently, carelessly, credulously or fraudulently must remain a matter of opinion. The question is beyond the scope of the present volume, and it is here only necessary to say that when, on 9th April 1805, the House of Commons, by the casting vote of the Speaker, passed a virtual censure on Melville, he immediately resigned his position as First Lord.

The whole affair was a terrible blow to the ministry and to Pitt,¹ who was bound to Melville by strong ties of personal affection; and possibly for that reason, but more probably as maintaining a continuity of admiralty policy, he resolved to appoint Middleton to the vacant post. But Middleton was now old, and though willing to act as irresponsible adviser, did not want the trouble and responsibility of office. He did, however, want a peerage, and apparently—for there are no letters of this date—had let Pitt know it. Pitt used this as a lever for making him accept, which he did reluctantly (pp. 73-4); and so, in the end of April, he became Lord Barham and First Lord of the Admiralty (p. 74). It is with his minutes, memoranda and semi-official correspondence as First Lord, that the bulk of this volume is filled.

¹ Cf. Brodrick and Fotheringham, *Political History of England* (vol. xi), p. 36.

This differs from the correspondence of earlier volumes in its lack both of intimacy and concentration. None of the men now directly under his orders had been his friend of former days. None of them had corresponded with him, except, perhaps, occasionally, in the most formal manner, when he was comptroller. They were all, too, much younger and by many years his junior. This may be emphasised by the following :—

	Born	Captain
Barham	1726	1758
Gardner	1742	1766
Cornwallis	1744	1766
Keith	1746	1775
Duckworth	1748	1780
Collingwood	1750	1780

It seems to explain how, in time of stress, it was more easy for these men severally to serve under his orders not only loyally, but without petulance or jealousy.

In arranging the orders and letters to or from these different commanders-in-chief, it was considered undesirable to attempt a simple chronological order, which would hide all sequence of idea or purpose. The only way in which this could be preserved was by calling in the assistance of geography, and arranging the letters by stations and, in a subsidiary degree, by episodes. The volume thus automatically resolved itself into a series of chapters which have but a slender connection with each other, except by the links held in the hands of the First Lord of the Admiralty, who was in reality—as is more certainly shown in

these pages—the master mind and director of the whole campaign. But broken up in this way, the volume cannot be, in itself, a history of the campaign ; and though the story of it, to naval readers at least, is fairly well known, it is, perhaps, better here to recapitulate the leading events.

When Barham took up the reins in the end of April 1805, the position was—that Napoleon, with an army of nominally 150,000 men encamped along the shore, mainly in the neighbourhood of Boulogne, was still ostentatiously threatening the invasion of this country, as he had been doing for the previous two years. That secondary attempts might be made from the Texel and from the Scheldt did not seem improbable ; and Lord Keith, commander-in-chief in the North Sea since the beginning of the war in May 1803, had it in charge to keep watch on all movements of the enemy, real or pretended. It was impossible to distinguish with certainty ; and a feint might always—if opportunity served—be converted into an actual attempt at invasion. To the naval mind of the day, this seemed an absurdity. It is said that more than a year before, Lord St. Vincent had snarled, ‘I don’t say the French can’t come ; I say they can’t come by sea’ ; in which some will perhaps see a forecast of the aeroplane ; and in the great debate on Pitt’s motion of 15th March 1804, Sir Edward Pellew had said :—

I do not really see in the arrangement of our naval defence, anything to excite the apprehensions of even the most timid among us. On the contrary, I see everything that may be expected from activity and perseverance

to inspire us with confidence. I see a triple naval bulwark, composed of one fleet acting on the enemy's coast ; of another, consisting of heavier ships, stationed in the Downs and ready to act at a moment's notice ; and of a third, close to the beach, capable of destroying any part of the enemy's flotilla that should escape the vigilance of the other two branches of our defence. . . .

As to the probability of the enemy being able, in a narrow sea, to pass through our blockading and protecting squadrons with all that secrecy and dexterity, and by those hidden means that some worthy people expect, I really, from anything I have seen in the course of my professional career, am not disposed to concur in it.¹

The possibility of the enemy attempting to support the flotilla from Boulogne, or the Scheldt, or anywhere else, by the grand fleet from Brest or Toulon, had been taken into account ; and from the very beginning of the war, Cornwallis or Gardner off Brest, with detachments off Rochefort and Ferrol, and Nelson off Toulon had maintained a close watch which was not improperly called a blockade, as signifying that the ships inside would come out at their peril.

The many extraordinary schemes which, during these years, Napoleon evolved, have been worked out in interesting analysis by Colonel Desbrière² of the French army staff, with the resulting conclusion that, as the schemes were faulty in almost every detail and impossible as a whole, they could not be seriously meant by a soldier of Napoleon's overpowering genius. We are unable

¹ Osler's *Life of Admiral Viscount Exmouth*, 222-4. The whole debate, as reported in Hansard, is worth careful study.

² *Projets et tentatives de débarquement aux Iles Britanniques (1793 à 1805) ; Trafalgar.*

to agree with this. With his correspondence and conflicting orders before us, it appears certain that the idea of invasion was persistent in Napoleon's mind, and that the absurdities and impossibilities which he devised mark the limitations of his genius. It has been said, on the other hand, that his genius was so vast, so comprehensive, that—able men as our admirals were—he hoodwinked them all. This is contrary to all evidence. They were prepared for any and every eventuality; and if they did not, in 1805, concentrate their attention on the danger of invasion, it was that the operations of the enemy's fleets did not convey to them any serious apprehension.

In January, 1805, Missiessy, with a small squadron, succeeded in escaping from Rochefort, in circumstances explained at pp. 252-3, and went to the West Indies, where he hoped to be joined by Villeneuve and the fleet which got out from Toulon at the same time, but, unknown to him, was driven back by stress of weather. When his appointed time expired, Missiessy returned from Martinique and, with equal good fortune, succeeded in getting again into Rochefort.

On the 30th March, Villeneuve made another attempt to escape from Toulon, and this time with success. Picking up at Cadiz a contingent of Spanish ships under Gravina, he went to the West Indies, with the intention—so far as can be gathered from his conflicting and contradictory instructions—of raiding the English islands, by way of occupying the time till he should be joined by Ganteaume with the fleet from Brest. If,

within a named limit of time, Ganteaume did not join him, he was to return and, meeting the Brest fleet outside, was, in company with it, to sweep the Channel, and escort the Boulogne flotilla across the Narrow Sea.

Something of all this was believed in by the ministry, and vaguely reached the nation at large, which dreamed evil dreams of Napoleon and his soldiery running riot through England as they had done through Germany, so much so that some modern writers have called this 'the time of the Great Terror.' This is, perhaps, a mistake. Alarm there was, but not terror. The volunteers mustered by their thousands; and Pitt negotiated a coalition of Austria, Russia, Sweden and Prussia—from which, however, Prussia seceded. The threat of this convinced Napoleon of the critical nature of his position; but he nursed the thought that when Villeneuve and Ganteaume were triumphant in the Channel and he, with his 150,000 soldiers, was dictating terms from Blackheath or Hampstead, the coalition would automatically collapse—as very probably it would have done.

Things, however, did not go exactly as Napoleon had pictured them. Instead of starting off for the East Indies, as he ought to have done, Nelson thought proper to follow to the West Indies, where, by the mere threat of his presence, he prevented Villeneuve from doing the contemplated damage to the English settlements, and persuaded him that his best course was to return at once to Europe. Information of his doing so

was brought to the admiralty by the Curieux brig which Nelson had at once dispatched, as well as the further intelligence that the northerly course pursued by Villeneuve showed that it was not his intention to return to the Mediterranean. The news reached the admiralty on the 9th of July, when orders were sent to Cornwallis, then commanding in chief off Brest, to place a squadron, under Sir Robert Calder, to the west of Cape Finisterre (pp. 258-9). This was at once done (p. 393), in ample time to meet the combined fleet, and inflict on it a check which—in the end—proved more disastrous than the most signal defeat would have been.

The news of this forced Napoleon to realise that his intended invasion of England must be postponed at least till after the coalition had been smashed ; and this he, at once, set about doing. The great events which followed are matters of general history : Trafalgar, on the part of the English ; Ulm and Austerlitz on the part of the French. At the moment, these last did not seem to affect the naval position, which the decisive victory of Trafalgar completely dominated ; but it will not be out of place to call attention to the fact—often overlooked—that the necessity which Napoleon was under, before Austerlitz, of keeping his army to its full strength, made it impossible for him to detach the much needed reinforcements to Saint-Cyr at Naples and suggested to him to try if Villeneuve, with his fleet, could not be used for that purpose. Notwithstanding their studied insolence and simulated passion, the positive

orders sent to Villeneuve to quit Cadiz were dictated by the call of a very real military necessity.

There can be little doubt that when circumstances compelled him to march into Germany, Napoleon fully intended, on his return, to renew his schemes for ferrying his army over to England. But to these, Trafalgar put a final stop; and the war at sea became, with the French, a war against trade and colonies, which led to the destruction of their squadron at St. Domingo; and with us, especially after the Orders in Council which answered the Decrees of Berlin and Milan, a war of blockade stringently enforced. But in that, Lord Barham had no share and this volume makes no mention of it. The death of Pitt, on the 23rd January 1806, broke up his ministry; and Barham, with the agreeable sense of having had a successful and brilliant nine months of office, finally retired from the admiralty.

With the exception of a few private letters and of the memoranda written for or to Lord Melville, all the papers printed in this volume belong to the period during which Barham was First Lord. The letters to him are from the originals, mostly holograph. The memoranda are often from originals in Barham's writing, on small slips pasted into a book; others from office drafts, frequently in J. D. Thomson's writing. Barham's letters are, with few exceptions, from his own roughly scribbled drafts, or from press copies which—as the art of taking press copies was in its infancy—are, as a rule, very bad, and now much

faded. These last are extremely difficult to read, and illegible words have occasionally had to be supplied by conjecture. The several sheets, too, on which they have been pressed, have not always been kept together, and to re-join them has been, at times, a matter of good luck or opinion, based not only on the sense, but also on correspondence of paper, writing and manner of pressing. Many sheets, however, seem to have been lost, and only in rare instances did the remaining fragments appear worth printing. Such as they are, the documents resolve themselves into :—

I. Correspondence with Lord Keith, commanding in chief in the Narrow and North Seas, with the especial charge of watching the enemy's coast, suppressing the enemy's privateers, and holding himself prepared to frustrate any attempt at invasion. Under his command was Sir Sidney Smith, who had been chosen by Pitt and Lord Castlereagh to carry out certain suggested experiments of Congreve, the inventor of shell-rockets, and of Fulton, the American engineer, who was full of weird schemes of sea-mines, torpedoes and submarines. Barham concurred with Keith in holding the poorest opinion of these inventions; but as the heads of the government believed in them and were eager to have them tried, he consented to hamper the service by placing—much to Keith's annoyance—several of the smaller vessels of his command at Smith's disposal. It was not till towards the end of the year that the projectors' complete failure permitted the ships to return to their proper duty. With these, as relating to

the North Sea, are classed the letters of Captain Collier (pp. 142 *seq.*) suggesting a way of preventing all further use of the Texel as a naval port. There is no reason to suppose that this was impracticable, though Gambier refused to accept the postulates ; but Patton and Garlies disapproved of the proposal on sentimental and moral grounds, and Barham appears to have agreed with them. Other projects, mostly worthless, were offered anonymously ; likewise letters of advice or abuse, of which samples are printed on pp. 203-4 : they can only have been preserved because the waste-paper basket happened to be over-full. This does not apply to the letters of *Nauticus* (pp. 185 *seq.*), which fall into a different category and are worth careful study by anyone who wishes to consider the situation of affairs as it appeared before the event.

2. The Correspondence with the Commander-in-Chief at Cork, which—as he had little force under his orders—refers mostly to the guarding the approaches to the Channel, the line of communications from Cape Clear to Cape Finisterre, and, incidentally, on to Cape St. Vincent, stretching out occasionally to the Azores.

3. The Correspondence with the Admiral off Brest, Gardner or Cornwallis, which last held the command during the critical time of the year. To him was written the celebrated order to send Sir Robert Calder off Cape Finisterre, as to which, legend and myth have been busy in a way that is directly contradicted by the order itself, as here printed. An order, signed by the board (pp. 258-9) was certainly not written and sent off by

Barham, on his own responsibility, before dressing. The fact seems to be that the scheme which was now to be carried out, had been in the air for some months. It is clearly outlined in the letters of Nicholas Brown (Nauticus), Keith's secretary; and whether we think that they are merely Brown's deductions from the breakfast-table conversation of Keith and his colleagues, or—which does not seem altogether improbable—that they were written at Keith's suggestion, it is acknowledged by Barham (p. 202) that he 'held them in estimation,' that is, that they had given him food for thought. The situation reported to him on the morning of the 9th July was thus not new; and it is not improbable that, if he received the news on awaking, he thought it out whilst shaving, jotted down the memo. (p. 257) when he had finished, and, in doing so, made up his mind as to the details, about which he was still in doubt. The interest of the facsimile lies in the proof it gives that Barham did not, without consideration, order the raising of the blockade of Rochefort, a measure whose propriety James and others, following James, have questioned. He saw the risk; but guided—not by James's tables, but—by official knowledge of the effective force at his disposal, he decided that the risk must be taken. All doubt on this point had disappeared before he wrote the private letter to Cornwallis (p. 258). The admiralty order followed to the port—presumably Plymouth—by a later messenger, but possibly in time to be forwarded by the same boat. Cornwallis had already been warned of the intelligence

brought by the Curieux (*Blockade of Brest*, ii. 301) and had transmitted it to Calder off Ferrol, who received it only a few hours before Cornwallis's later letter transmitting the admiralty orders (*ib.* 303-4). But out of this comes an interesting question. The position to be taken by Calder and the time he was to remain on it are different in the order and in the memo. It would seem as if the change was made by the board. But the private letter, which would be meaningless if it followed, or even accompanied the order, agrees with it in these particulars of position and time. It must have been written and dispatched before the board met; the change was, therefore, Barham's own, and the order was dictated by Barham. Certainty is impossible: but we know of nothing in the lives of either Gambier or Garlies which lead us to suppose that they would venture, on such a point, to dispute their chief's opinion.

The accounts of the battle which follow (pp. 260 *seq.*) are merely complementary of those given in *Blockade of Brest* (ii. 311 *seq.*), and lead us to the conclusion that Calder had hard measure served out to him, especially when we remember that just ten years earlier, Hotham had been rewarded with an Irish peerage for an action that compares unfavourably with that off Cape Finisterre.¹

¹ Calder's early service, as given in the *D.N.B.*, quoted from the *Naval Chronicle* (vol. xvii.), is entirely wrong. A writer in *Blackwood's Magazine* (March 1910) called attention to the mistake, which is now corrected by reference to his passing

4. The Correspondence with the Commander off Cadiz—Orde, Nelson or Collingwood. The curious letters from and to Sir John Orde are—in part, at least—explained by remembering his previous disagreement with Lord St. Vincent, whom he challenged to a duel. He, naturally, had no service under St. Vincent's administration ; but under Lord Melville's, his political or family interest procured him—much to Nelson's disgust—the command off Cadiz.

It will be noticed, perhaps with some surprise, that these papers shed no light on the battle of Trafalgar, with the exception of the plan, of which a facsimile is given at p. 325. A not very accurate copy of this was published in the *Naval Chronicle* for the following December (vol. xiv. p. 496), where it is said that 'the situation of the combined fleet as here represented, has been vouched to be correct by Admiral Villeneuve, in the original sent to the admiralty.' It will be seen that this is not literally correct, the attestation being by Magendie, whose position was something like that of Captain of the Fleet. But even if it was correct,

certificate, dated 2nd June 1762, in which he is described as appearing to be 20, though, in fact, he was only 17.

Ship's Name	Rating	y.	m.	w.	d.
Princess Royal	Capt. Servt.	1	3	3	1
Nassau	" "	1	0	2	5
"	Midn.	2	8	0	0
Superbe	"	0	5	0	3
Dublin	"	0	11	1	3
		6	2	3	5

Certificates by Capts. Sayer (Nassau), Rowley (Superbe), Gascoigne (Dublin). The Princess Royal was presumably a customary fiction.

the copy, as printed in the *Naval Chronicle* and reproduced by Mr. Newbolt in his *Year of Trafalgar*, differs from the original in several not unimportant details, and especially in the relative positions of the Bucentaure, Neptune (French) and Redoubtable. The names too are not always in agreement. Still the general idea remains unaltered, and is essentially the same as that of the various French plans, produced at the court martial on Rear-Admiral Dumanoir, as published by Colonel Desbrière in his *Trafalgar*.

It is not suggested that in these plans, English or French, there is any pretence of scientific exactness. The English one was, it is said, drawn by Jonas Toby, purser of the *Euryalus*, who may quite probably have been taking notes for Captain Blackwood and have drawn the sketch of what he saw, or thought he saw. It was probably the only one elaborated from a sketch drawn strictly at the time. Probably what Captain de Prigny of the Bucentaure, wrote, might equally have been written by the other witnesses:—'Je vous prie d'observer que tous les journeaux, cahiers de signaux et les notes que j'avais fait prendre ayant été perdus par les événements du combat et ceux qui l'ont suivi, j'ai été obligé de recourir à ma seule mémoire. Je pense cependant que les faits sont exactement rapportés.'¹ This was written from Cadiz, four days after the battle, and though it is not said that the sketches accompanied the letter and his report, it would seem probable that they did. When we find, then, the English plan,

¹ Desbrière, *Trafalgar*, Documents Annexes, p. 138.

the French plans, the verbal evidence of the French captains, the special language used by Collingwood in his dispatch,¹ and the general belief accepted by Lord St. Vincent,² all bearing witness to the attack in two lines ahead, it would seem to require some evidence much stronger than any hitherto adduced, to upset the long received account of the English advance and attack. It is not a question of theory, but of direct contemporary testimony.

From the subsequent correspondence with Collingwood, it appears that, though the decisive nature of the victory was recognised from the first, Barham was in no hurry to believe that the French were either cowed or rendered completely impotent. The anxiety he was under for the safety of the crippled home-coming ships, shows plainly that—on the contrary—he expected an effort on their part to obtain some compensation for their losses. Such an effort they did, in fact, make, though not exactly in the way which Barham expected, nor with all the success which

¹ The words are: 'signal for the fleet to bear up in two columns, as they are formed in order of sailing'; 'no signals were made "except to direct close order as the lines bore down"'; 'the Victory led the weather column and the Royal Sovereign, the lee'; 'the leading ships of the column breaking through the enemy's line . . . the succeeding ships breaking through in all parts astern of their leaders.'—Nicolas, vii. 212-13.

² On 2nd June, 1806, St. Vincent, then off Ushant, in the *Hibernia*, wrote to Lord Howick, first lord of the Admiralty, some remarks on Clerk's *Essay on Naval Tactics*, in the course of which he said 'Clerk's position "that a fleet to windward bearing down at right angles upon the fleet of the enemy must be crippled, if not totally disabled before it can reach the enemy," has been disproved by the more recent action under Lord Nelson, bearing down in two columns.' Tucker's *Memoirs of the Earl of St. Vincent*, ii. 283.

they presumably hoped. The Rochefort squadron which put to sea in July, when Stirling raised the blockade (p. 259), continued at sea for several months, doing much injury to our trade, capturing the Calcutta,—an East India-man bought into the navy as a 56-gun ship for convoy and transport service—and in the end, returned safely to Rochefort about 24th November (p. 294 ; Chevalier, iii. 240). This was, of course, before Trafalgar produced its effect ; but afterwards, in December, the Piémontaise got away and assisted in doing much damage in Indian waters before she was satisfactorily accounted for ;¹ and on the 13th December, two squadrons of six and five ships of the line, commanded respectively by Rear-Admirals Willaumez and Leissègues, sailed from Brest, where the stringency of the blockade had been much relaxed.

Sir John Borlase Warren and Sir John Richard Strachan were sent after them as soon as possible, but without any immediate good success ;² and the first named, that under Willaumez, not having been able to do any mischief, and having lost one of its ships, driven on shore near Cape Henry and there burnt, was lucky enough to get back in safety to France in disjointed units. But this does not come into the story of Lord Barham. The fortunes of the other squadron, under Leissègues, were more significant. Vice-Admiral Sir John

¹ Laughton, *Studies in Naval History*, 448-9 ; *Sea-Fights and Adventures*, 205 ff.

² Later on Strachan's squadron was mainly instrumental in disintegrating that of Willaumez, and Warren put an end to the cruise of Linois.

Duckworth, who had been intended as a reinforcement to Nelson, did not join the little squadron left to blockade Cadiz till the 15th November. There he remained in compliance, apparently, with orders left for him, commanding five ships of the line, till on the 26th he learned that an enemy's squadron had been sighted to the southward of Madeira. Jumping to the conclusion that this was the much-looked-for Rochefort squadron, without the permission or knowledge of his commander-in-chief (p. 352), then off Cartagena, he raised the blockade, and, with his whole squadron, started off to look for the enemy. Not finding him near Madeira, he followed the quest as far south as Cape Verd, and was working back to his station off Cadiz when chance brought him within distant sight of the squadron under Willaumez. That, with a superior force, Willaumez preferred to fly, is a clear indication that fighting was not his first object. For thirty-six hours Duckworth chased; but as at the end of that time his little squadron was hopelessly out of hand, he was obliged to give it up; one of his ships, the *Powerful*, he detached to the East Indies, and finding that some of the others were short of water, he bore up for Barbados. Thence he went to St. Kitts, where he was joined by Rear-Admiral Cochrane, in the *Northumberland*, with the *Atlas*; and learning that some French ships of the line were at Saint-Domingo, he proceeded thither.

These French ships were the squadron of Leissègues, which, having met with heavy weather and sustained much damage, had been refitting.

They were still in a state of internal confusion, aggravated, no doubt, by their having very raw ship's companies.

The two little fleets in presence of each other were :—

English

Canopus	80	R. Adml. Louis ; Capt. F. W. Austen.
Superb		Vice-Adml. Sir J. T. Duckworth ;
		Capt. R. G. Keats.
Spencer	74	Captain The Hon. Robert Stopford.
Donegal		Captain Pulteney Malcolm.
Northumber-		R. Adml. The Hon. A. Cochrane ;
land		Capt. J. Morrison.
Atlas		Captain Samuel Pym.
Agamemnon	64	Captain Sir Edward Berry.
Frigates :		
Acasta	40	Capt. R. D. Dunn.
Amethyst	36	" J. W. Spranger.
Magiciuse	36	" R. Mackenzie.

French

Imperial	120	R. Adml. Leissègues :	Cap ^{ne} Bigot.
Alexandre	80	Capitaine	Garreau.
Brave	74	"	Coudé.
Diomède		"	J. B. Henry.
Jupiter		"	Laignel.
Frigates :			
		Comète.	
		Félicité.	
		Diligente.	

In addition to their rating, the ships of both fleets mounted an uncertain number of canonades. Troude describes the *Alexandre* as of 94 guns, and the French 74s as of 86. The English 74s he speaks of as of only 82, which seems to be correct.

Duckworth arrived off Saint-Domingo on the morning of the 6th February 1806, and in a short

action of two hours, captured three of the French ships and drove on shore the other two, which, the next day, he burnt (pp. 378-80). The completeness of the victory and the fact that it was won by seven ships against five, have led to the curious and contradictory opinion that the odds were so much in favour of the English, that it can only be ranked as a creditable piece of work. This is directly stated in the *Naval Chronicle* published at the time; by Ekins in *Naval Battles*, and—which has perhaps weighed more with public opinion than all others—by James in the *Naval History*.¹

The result, indeed, showed—in strict agreement with Nelson's axiom, that numbers only can annihilate—that seven ships of comparable strength are superior to five; it also showed that well-trained, well-exercised crews and well-skilled officers are superior—enormously superior to raw levies under unpractised officers; but that is not the way in which James has systematically counted the odds in the several frigate actions which he has recorded; it is not the way in which the naval 'experts' of the present day estimate odds, when they propound the dogma that every English ship must be of force not less than any possible antagonist; and that the strength of a fleet depends on the displacement, weight of broadside and number of men of each individual

¹ James is so constant in his hostility to and disparagement of Duckworth that they awaken a presumption that when Duckworth was commander-in-chief at Jamaica (1801-3) he must, in some way, have annoyed James, then a lawyer practising in the colonial court.

ship ; that a fleet is, in fact, an aggregation, not a consolidation of units. So considered, the Frenchsquadron at Saint-Domingo was enormously superior to the English. As in each of the three requisites named, the French superiority was about six to five, the total superiority of the French squadron was about 170 to 100 ; a statement which—in the language of Euclid—is absurd.¹

What will probably strike the ordinary reader as the most remarkable outcome of these papers is the transparent fact that the main anxiety of the admiralty, and imparted by it to the commanders-in-chief, especially those in the North Sea and off Brest, was not the danger of invasion, which our historians have represented as paramount, but the possibility of danger to the trade. The country was alarmed and was mustering by its thousands in the ranks of the volunteers ; ministers were anxious and giving a ready ear to projects of sea-mines or submarines, which it was to take a hundred years of investigation and experiment to render efficient ; but amidst it all, Barham was writing in June (p. 254), that it is evident that depredation and the destruction of our trade is the enemy's grand object, and therefore it is necessary to guard as much as possible against it, although at the beginning of the war it may have been more especially necessary to guard against any attempt at invasion. From all quarters came in expressions of anxiety or apprehension on this score. One of the most important

¹ $(12)^3 : (10)^3 = 1728 : 1000 = 173 : 100.$

is that from the chairman of the East India Company on the 16th August (p. 276). 'The enemy having now so large a naval force at Ferrol, to which our ships will be exposed, I earnestly hope your lordship . . . may be able to afford the India fleet an effectual protection when it approaches the shores of Europe.'

It was on this very day, anticipating the order which was sent to him with this letter, that Cornwallis perpetrated the 'insigne bêtise' of sending Calder off Ferrol, a measure which Barham and the admiralty formally approved of (pp. 276, 279). A few days later we find Cornwallis writing: 'I should suppose by their movements, that the ships at Brest wish to get to sea, and I should not be at all surprised if their object was to endeavour to intercept our homeward-bound convoys'; and on the 28th August, Barham wrote: 'As the East and West India fleets expected within these ten days, are of the immense value of 10 millions . . . I wish you may be able to spare four ships and a frigate to cruise in the Chops of the Channel for about ten days for the preservation of these convoys'; and this, though on or about the same day he wrote that the attempt at invasion must be made 'now or never' (p. 278).

In a similar way, Keith's letters show that he was much more anxious about the sailing of the two enemy's frigates from Flushing, the number of enemy's privateers and the difficulty he was under because all his frigates and smaller vessels had been put at the disposal of Sir Sidney Smith, than he was about the

embarkation of the French troops (p. 181). With all his good qualities, Smith was never able to win the confidence or cordial approval of his commanding officers. Barham wrote of him as wanting judgment; and, entirely disapproving the experimental warfare in which he had been trying to destroy the enemy's flotilla, wrote (p. 162): 'The vessels employed upon it might be used to much more advantage in protecting our trade to the westward, or in convoying the ships.' It is, perhaps, worth pointing out that—if we may accept the public statements of the present Secretary for War and the present First Lord—the idea which prescribes the policy of the admiralty at the present time, or is intended to prescribe it in any future war, is—notwithstanding the very great difference of some of the conditions—the same as that which ruled the policy of Barham and his colleagues in 1805.

When Lord Barham left the admiralty, short time sufficed him to wind up and end his official connection with all public business. He retired to Teston, and seems to have made Barham Court¹ his permanent residence during his remaining years. Of his correspondence at this time, the traces are very scanty, except, indeed, of that with his former secretary, Mr.—afterwards Sir—J. Deas Thomson. This last relates only to private

¹ It is perhaps well to remind the reader that Barham Court, from which Lord Barham took his title, is in the parish of Teston, four miles west of Maidstone; not in the parish of Barham, six miles south-east of Canterbury.

affairs and to his farming, in which he had always taken great interest. Other letters refer to the fortunes of his grandchildren and more particularly of Frederick Noel, then a midshipman, to which we owe the interesting letter from Collingwood (p. 385).

It has been said (vol. i. p. xxi) that, at one time, Thomson had the intention of writing the Life of his patron and friend, but never carried it out. Rather curiously, as inverting the usual order of literary composition, he wrote the Preface, which is thus literally,—what a modern affectation likes to call it—a Foreword. Though it would possibly have been subjected to some later modifications, it is interesting, even as it stands, as an appreciation, however partial, by one who knew Barham well, both in his public and private capacity.

Preface.

The life of Admiral Sir Charles Middleton, afterwards Lord Barham, although not exhibiting examples of those brilliant achievements which so deservedly attract the admiration of the country to its favourite service, will nevertheless be found to have been devoted with singular energy and effect to those important branches of it which are well known to be the sheet anchor on which our fate and seamen have to depend. Without what are generally denominated the civil departments of the navy (in contradistinction to those afloat) are well regulated, due care taken that the stores and materials supplied be of the first quality, and the requisite attention paid to everything connected with the building, arming and equipment of the fleet, the duties of the naval administration are but imperfectly performed.

That Sir Charles Middleton, when appointed to the arduous situation of comptroller of the navy on the breaking out of hostilities with France in 1778, and during the 12 years he executed the duties of that important situation, showed the utmost aptitude for business, and further, that when raised to the peerage and placed at the head of the admiralty in 1805, he brought into full force and vigour the vast experience he had acquired as comptroller of the navy, and subsequently, as senior sea lord of the admiralty in 1794-5, has, it is believed, been generally acknowledged. The brilliant success which attended his management of the fleet, when first lord in 1805-6, by which, in the short space of nine months, the enemy lost 31 sail of the line, 5 frigates and 5 corvettes, is the best proof that can be given of the energetic mind of a man then entering on the 80th year of his age.

[Sir Robert Calder's action, the great victory of Trafalgar, Sir Richard Strachan's signal success, and Sir John Duckworth's brilliant affair of Saint Domingo, all took place within the period of his naval administration.]

When the death of his steady and valued friend, Mr. Pitt, put an end to that administration, Lord Barham finally retired from public life, retaining every faculty of his mind, and enjoying his favourite pursuit when out of office—that of the management of his farm—at Teston in Kent, where he died in June 1813, in the 87th year of his age, revered and respected by all who knew him.

To this may be added the description of Barham Court and the picture of Lord Barham in his retirement, drawn by William Wilberforce, with whom a fellowship in many matters, religious and charitable, had long and closely connected him. A slight accident had, for some weeks, confined Wilberforce to the sofa in his London

room. On his liberation, he paid Barham a visit, and on 25th July 1810, wrote to a friend and frequent correspondent (Lord Muncaster) from Barham Court :—

So soon as I was well on my legs again, I repaired to my worthy old friend, Lord Barham's, and found both him and his place in high preservation. Of the latter you have heard me speak. It has none of the grand features of your northern beauties, but for the charms of softness and elegance I never beheld a superior to Barham Court; and there is the *utile* with the *dulce*, for the most perfect specimen, I believe, in England of the *ferme ornée* has been also one of the most profitable of farms. But my good old friend himself is the most extraordinary of all. We suppose he is about 84, and the accounts I have received would make him more. He goes on just like any other man of 40 or 50. He answers his letters regularly after breakfast, then takes his ride and looks about his farm and employs himself till dinner. At half past four in the afternoon he takes as long or as short a walk as you desire; and what surprises me most of all, when he comes in he reads two, three or four hours, till bedtime, without the slightest appearance of drowsiness, in whatever publication the discussions of the day render interesting.¹

Three years later (25th June, 1813) and again from Barham Court, he wrote to another correspondent (Samuel Smith) :—

I am come here on a melancholy occasion, and have just been attending to the grave the remains of my old friend, Lord Barham, having been desired so to do by his daughter. It is an affecting scene; but after all, it is only the vile body we commit to the grave; but the immortal spirit is not so confined, but, I doubt not, is

¹ *Life of William Wilberforce*, iii. 459-60.

waiting in a happy intermediate state, the full consummation of its felicity.¹

In concluding this Introduction and bringing to an end this selection from the Barham Papers, the editor would repeat his sense of the Society's obligation to Lord Gainsborough for their loan; and would also acknowledge the kindness of Mrs. Stirling, in allowing him to supplement them from the papers of her grandfather, Sir J. Deas Thomson. He would express his indebtedness to Mr. Julian Corbett for some interesting suggestions, which he has endeavoured to make proper use of. To Mr. Hubert Hall of the Record Office, his personal thanks are due for much generous assistance in solving many little puzzles of service or genealogy.

¹ *Life of William Wilberforce*, iv. 122.



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Portrait of Lord Barham, Admiral of the Red Squadron

Frontispiece

[From an Engraving by Miss M. Bourlier after a
Drawing by John Downman. Published by Cadell
and Davies, 12th October 1809.]

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LETTERS AND PAPERS
OF
LORD BARHAM

MIDDLETON TO LORD CHATHAM

[Chatham Papers, 365]

[Holograph.]

12th December, 1794.

My Lord,—I have avoided asking your lordship concerning the reports that are going about, because it would lead to questions concerning myself which it might be improper for your lordship to answer; but, if there is any truth in your lordship's design of changing your office, and it is expected from me to give the ineffectual application and attendance which I have hitherto done, under a new first lord, I must beg and request that my name may be left out of the patent.

My health is unequal to the task, and my patience exhausted with the state and manner of carrying on business in the office. As long as your lordship remains I feel myself bound to assist you, but this obligation is at an end when another lord is appointed.

I am . . .

CHAS. MIDDLETON.

MEMORANDUM BY LORD SPENCER

Force intended for the West Indies

[Autograph draft.]

[?25th August, 1795.]¹

As the force intended for the Leeward Islands may be looked upon as the main body of the whole British army, and its safe and speedy arrival as the grand remaining object of the present war, it seems necessary that it should be accompanied, during the whole of the passage thither, by a naval force so respectable as to preclude the possibility of any successful obstruction from any force the enemy may be able to send out. It is therefore proposed that such a number of ships of the line should accompany the expedition as to enable those now in the Leeward Islands to be sent home on their arrival.

For this purpose, at least six line of battle ships should be ordered for that service in addition to the Colossus, Trident and Polyphemus already ordered, and I should propose those named in the margin [*Prince George, *Irresistible, *Impregnable, *Canada, *Magnificent, *Repulse, or *Alfred] to be selected for that purpose. Admiral Christian should hoist his flag on board the *Prince George and Admiral Pole on board the Colossus. The *Polyphemus and Unicorn should be ordered from Cork, and that frigate should be substituted to the Greyhound, as being a heavier one, and two more 18-pounder frigates added, the *Alemène and *Leda. As a bomb vessel is wanted, the

¹ On the 27th August, the ships named below and marked * were ordered to be provisioned and stored for foreign service, and on the 1st September the Prince George was ordered to be fitted for a flag.

*Terror bomb should be attached to this squadron and the other bomb (the Vesuvius) be immediately ordered to be fitted, to be ready in case one should be required at home. If the Repulse is not gone with Admiral Pringle she will do very well; if she is, the Magnificent or Vengeance (but I should prefer the former) should be completed immediately and fitted for foreign service.

On their arrival in the West India Islands, Sir John Laforey should be ordered to send home 6 of the 7 sail of the line he has there, and in the other to proceed and take the command on the Jamaica station when the ships armed *en flûte* conveying the troops for this purpose shall arrive. These must be directed, having first taken in their provisions, to proceed to Cork and take on board the regiments appropriated to that service and then put to sea as soon as possible and make Barbados, from whence they will proceed to St. Domingo under the orders of Sir John Laforey; they may be strengthened through the Bay by some of Admiral Kingsmill's frigates. Admiral Parker must have orders to co-operate with the general commanding the San Domingo expedition, and Sir John Laforey to take a station for the protection of Jamaica from the enemy's cruisers.

As this plan of operations will be subject to the objection of weakening the squadrons at home, it must be remembered that the enemy's force is also considerably weakened in respect of line of battle ships, that we have every reason to suppose that they are likely to turn their thoughts to smaller cruisers and privateering, which must be guarded against by small squadrons of frigates and one or two ships of the line together. The 6 sail now stated to be ready for sea at Brest are very probably intended to be sent to the West

Indies and must be narrowly watched by the squadron off the French coast.

From the report come to day from Lord Bridport of the sickly state of his fleet, particularly in point of scurvy, a considerable supply of lemon juice and antiscorbutics of all sorts should be immediately sent out in some sloop or frigate to the squadron under Admiral Cornwallis; and as some time must be lost in refitting and refreshing the crews which come in with Lord Bridport, Admiral Cornwallis should be ordered to show himself frequently off Brest as well as off L'Orient and some strong squadron of frigates must be sent to cruise far down in the Bay as soon as possible, to keep watch over the frigates we hear of there. Directions should also be sent to the Ports of Plymouth and to the eastward in conformity to the observations contained in Dr. Trotter's letters. Supplies should continue to be constantly sent to Sir John Warren of fresh meat, vegetables and antiscorbutics, and a large quantity of seeds of quick growing vegetables should be also sent which, by being sown in the islands of Hédic and Houat, will soon give a fresh supply of the most antiscorbutic kinds of vegetables.¹

If the operations on the coast should continue to require assistance from the fleet beyond the 18th of September (which it is now rather probable that they may), the admiral commanding should be instructed, on the appearance of blowing weather from the westward, to detach about five or six sail of the line to join Sir John Warren in Quiberon Bay, where they may safely anchor under the lee

¹ The cultivation of these islands as kitchen-gardens for the use of the fleet is an eloquent testimony of the completeness of the English command of the sea. The doing so was following the example set by Hawke in 1760.

of the islands of which they are in possession, and stretch over with the rest of his fleet to Cawsand or Torbay, where he may get refreshment and hold himself in constant readiness to put to sea again.

After this detachment has been made the Channel fleet will still consist of the following ships :—[*List omitted*]*—*in all 25 ; to which may be added as they come forward [*five more, named*], which will make them 30.

It is not probable that the proposed armament can sail before the 1st of October, though it is right to press it forward for the 15th of September. By that time it may be hoped that the 2nd class of East Indiamen may be arrived, which will bring with them the Sceptre to strengthen Admiral Duncan, if necessary, and a good supply of men to supply the place of those whom I should recommend to be taken to complete the ships ordered for the West Indies; the *Belliqueux* and *Europa* may be paid off, which will also furnish some able seamen.

R.-ADMIRAL GAMBIER TO MIDDLETON

[*Autograph.*]

Admiralty. 29th October, 1795.

Dear Sir,—I had a little conversation with Lord Spencer this morning. I informed him I had no object whatever in view for myself but that of being useful in the situation that I might be placed [*in*]; and that if I caused a difficulty¹ in any arrangement that he may wish to make, I desired he would not have any scruple about me; that I have but one wish, which he knew was relieving my brother from his present

¹ It will be remembered that Gambier was Middleton's nephew.

embarrassment and his being placed in a situation more to his satisfaction. He said he was glad that I should continue here, and gave me to understand that he would certainly attend to my request respecting my brother, and that he hoped to bring him into the arrangement that was intended. He regretted exceedingly your loss, which could not be replaced by any one.

I shall be able to inform you more fully of our conversation when we meet. He told me that Admiral Young was to come into the vacancy. Best regards and good wishes to Mr. and Mrs. Cornwall.

An immense concourse of people accompanied the king on his way to and from the House of Lords, but no disturbance.

[*Not signed.*]

MIDDLETON TO CHATHAM

[Chatham Papers, 365]

[*Holograph.*]

8th November, 1795.

My Lord,—As I had to thank your lordship for the seat I held at the admiralty board, I think it my duty to acquaint you with the reason of my withdrawing myself from it, and which I am sorry I had not done when your lordship left it. Being, however, flattered by an assurance that the office should be so arranged as to give me every degree of assistance in the execution of the business, I reluctantly acquiesced.

An alteration some time afterwards took place, but I declare to your lordship, that so little was I confided in, that I knew nothing further of the change beyond an assent being given to Captain Gambier's being appointed to assist me.

If the business in the office had been arranged at the same time, and a proper confidence placed in me, I should with a degree of satisfaction have continued my poor endeavours for the public service; but, as no judicious step was taken towards dividing the business in that department, and everything was left as before to memory and the discretion of the clerks, I saw little hopes of amendment or assistance in that line.

In my own branch, instead of that cordiality and confidence which your lordship honoured me with, I experienced nothing beyond the name, and knew no more of what was passing in any other channel, than what was accidentally communicated at second hand.

In this awkward kind of situation have I found myself for some time past, and but for the earnest solicitation of my friends, should have withdrawn myself from it; but finding them unanimous in wishing me to see an end of the war, and being inclined to do all I could towards the success of the fleet, I made up my mind to their opinion, and was determined to persevere, with every difficulty in my way which the want of confidence could produce.

I will not trouble your lordship longer with the mortifications which frequently occurred on this score, nor of the loose and irregular manner in which the business was executed, and of which I frequently complained. But an event has happened, and which I did everything in my power to prevent, because I thought it disgraceful on the part of the admiralty, cruel and unjust to an individual, and unprecedented (as far as I knew) in the service; I mean the recall of Sir John Laforey to make way for one of the youngest rear-admirals in the service, and without any one reason whatever given in the order why he is recalled.

If I had not known Sir John Laforey in service and from long experience, to be as good an officer as any in the king's service, or if the severity of the measure had been softened by his Majesty's command, I should in duty have acquiesced. But my concurrence and signature being required in a bullying letter, unbecoming the rank and office of the writer, and so very opposite to that consideration and mildness which I ever experienced from your lordship, I felt a satisfaction in having it in my power to turn my back upon such Superiority, and to resign my seat rather than submit to it.

At a leisure moment I will, with permission, communicate the letters that have passed on this extraordinary occasion; and in the meantime, I will flatter myself with the hope of maintaining your lordship and Mr. Pitt's good opinion, being, with great respect and esteem, . . .

CHAS. MIDDLETON.

MIDDLETON TO (P)LORD LOUGH-
BOROUGH¹

[*Rough copy. Autograph.*] Teston. 11th November, 1795.

My dear Lord,—It would be very difficult to explain by letter my reasons for resigning my seat at the admiralty, but as soon as I can conveniently return to town, I will show your lordship the correspondence that has passed, when I am persuaded you will agree with my other friends in seeing the impossibility of my doing otherwise than I did. The little knowledge that I have gained

¹ The Lord Chancellor. This is rather a guess. The endorsement—so far as it can be read—is 'answer to Lord Lough'; but whether this is the correct interpretation, and whether—if it is—Lough stands for Loughborough must remain doubtful.

from experience is always at the service of my country when it can prove useful; but circumstanced as I was in the admiralty, it was out of my power to do much good.

I am sensible of your lordship's friendship, and if any part of my conduct on the present occasion required justification, I could not place it more to my satisfaction than in your lordship's hands. I never, my dear lord, played the actor, nor aimed at any other part than doing my duty with faithfulness. I have never been greedy of emolument, neither have I in any instance solicited a favour for myself. To nibble therefore at the little credit I have acquired is pulling to pieces a poor labourer's crust. I have however, I thank God, a peace within, which the world cannot give nor take away, and as long as my own conscience does not condemn me, I am indifferent about further fame, and in every situation shall reflect with pleasure on your lordship's kindness and attachment; being, with much regard and esteem,

My dear Lord,

Affectionately yours,

CHAS. MIDDLETON.

ANONYMOUS TO MIDDLETON¹

[? April, 1798.]

Dear Sir,—I perceive by the king's message, as well as by the public prints, that the French

¹ There is no clue to the writer of this letter, but the writing is that of an educated man, and has no appearance of being disguised. The paper has the water mark '1797'; and the 'king's message' must have been that presented to the House of Commons by Mr. Secretary Dundas on the 20th April, 1798. Cf. *Parliamentary History*. As to the grounds for the 'message,' see La Jonquière, *L'Expédition d'Égypte*, vol. i. chaps. i.-iii. Not the least curious thing about it is that the writer seems ignorant of the fact that Middleton was not at the admiralty.

are serious in their preparations to invade us. You will therefore, I am sure, excuse me, if I think it right to throw out a few hints on the subject. You will probably meet with many sea-officers who may make light of our enemies' threats ; and because the means which they have proposed to adopt have never come within their experience, they will roundly pronounce them impracticable. But the truth is, there are very few things impracticable to active minds with sound judgments ; and if the French will venture to sacrifice 50,000 men, of which there cannot be much doubt considering what has already passed, I see no insuperable difficulty in landing 30,000. It is therefore much better and safer to suppose the attempt possible, and to be quickened into endeavours to guard against it, than to slumber over the idea of any supposed impracticability.

Under this impression, I would suggest that, if the preparations for invasion are making between the Texel and Brest, it will be prudent and necessary to keep your frigates and smaller vessels within that compass, and to anchor as nearly as may be with safety to the enemies' ports. If rafts are to be made use of, we should have ships and vessels furnished with many howitzers, carronade grape, and with combustibles for setting them or transports on fire, without waiting to take possession of them. If our ships are kept on our own side of the Channel, it will probably be a lee-shore when the enemy appear upon it, and, in that case, we should be left without room and without time to act offensively. If these frigates were divided into small squadrons, and put under the direction of active intelligent officers, with distinguishing flags and pennants,

it would give additional energy and usefulness to their operation and effect.

The commanding officers at Plymouth, Portsmouth and the Downs ought to be of the best repute in the service for experience, judgment and activity of mind. As many of the smaller line of battle ships as can be spared from watching the Brest fleet, should be under their command, with a few frigates beside, who should be ready to put to sea at a moment's notice, if exigency should require it. The port admirals should be men of arrangement, firm in their conduct, and active in equipments. This is no time for punctilio. Small objects must give way to greater when the country is in danger. There are many excellent officers unemployed. All may be made useful.

We should not throw away money and labour in the Thames. When I came to the admiralty, that absurd business seemed to be the favourite project of almost everybody. But as long as the Trinity-House have possession of the buoys on the Spits, the enemy cannot get within them.

As we have no enemy that can contend with us at sea, two thirds of the marines may safely be landed from all the two-decked ships. If the sea-officers should grumble on such occasions, they must not be minded. As the ocean will be open to the enemy's privateers, while our frigates are confined to the Channel, no ships should be permitted to sail without convoy during that time. Great care likewise should be taken so to station the Irish squadrons, as to counteract the enemy's endeavours. I don't wish to give you the trouble to acknowledge this paper, as I may have occasion to transmit some further hints, when the enemy's views and means of executing them shall become more apparent.

MIDDLETON TO MR. FORDYCE

[Autograph, rough copy.]

16th August, 1798.

My dear Sir,—I have been very uneasy since I knew the precise force that has been sent to the Mediterranean after Bonaparte; it is not even sufficient to attack him with any hope of success, much less to counteracting his views against India, if such they are. If our hopes arise from Lord St. Vincent's success against the Spaniards, it argues very little knowledge of sea affairs; but supposing the fleets equal—which is by no means the case—how impracticable is it for four frigates to impede a convoy of transports who have sixteen frigates to protect them. I have no wishes myself that Nelson should meet Bonaparte under any circumstances but a separation of ships. In that case, an active force, though inferior, may do great things; but as to impeding the enterprise they have in view, it is impracticable, and unless we are guarded in the Straits of Babel Mandel as in the Persian Gulf, I see no impediment, whatever Mr. *[illegible]*¹ may say, to the French joining Tippoo with 6, 8, or 10,000 men.

But, my good friend—How came such an armament to be fitted out at Toulon and to sail without our guessing at their destination? Had we no frigates to cruise for intelligence from neutral vessels off Toulon? It is too late to shut the stable door when the steed is stolen. He only does his business well who provides his materials beforehand, and those only are fit to conduct military affairs, who render the execution easy by forethought and preparation. I hope my fears are groundless; I cannot count all the

¹ Might be 'Francis' or 'Tierney.'

grounds for them as proper ; but they are many ; and unless the utmost economy is used in the distribution of ships, and the most active diligence in the equipments, the cloud that has been thickening will still burst upon us.

We have a large fleet, but we have more to do with it than people are aware of. Our convoys, while the enemy keeps in port, need not be so strong as when their frigates kept the sea. When I had the management of this business, I always considered what was against us, and kept the great force unimpaired for unforeseen services. The fleets that have been long collecting against us are by degrees growing formidable, and it has been owing to a want of skill on their parts that they have not been more formidable in their operations.¹

MIDDLETON TO J. D. THOMSON

[Holograph.]

Exton. 21st July, 1800.

Dear Sir,—I thank you for your letter of the 12th which I received on my arrival here and also for Mr. Hotchkis's remittance which I shall acknowledge by this opportunity.

I have certainly some thoughts of seeing Scotland, God willing, this summer, and I meant to have advised you of my arrangement as soon as I could settle it. My stay will not be more than a fortnight, and as I wish during that time to have it as much as possible to myself, I must request you to keep my intention to yourself.

¹ A very extraordinary letter, especially when we note the date of it : but it will be remembered that Middleton was out of touch with the admiralty, and that his feelings towards the first lord were the reverse of friendly.

At my time of life, eating and drinking with strangers, or even others who may draw me into this way of misspending my time, would not only be very disagreeable but a great restraint. My wish is, after seeing a few friends with whom I am intimate and connected, to examine the improvements that have taken place since I was last in Edinburgh, and to visit the town of Crail and its neighbourhood, where I was for some years at school.

It will probably be about the first week in September before I shall be able to reach Edinburgh, and as Colonel Noel means to take a house for some time I shall probably get a bed there for the time I stay. Mrs. Noel wrote Miss Pringle on this subject; but between ourselves, she wished it had been to you, as women are not much conversant in such matters. I have some thoughts of seeing the Lakes and some places in Yorkshire in my way; and as Mrs. Noel will probably arrive about the same time, I think of taking her young men with me. It is very pleasing to hear so much in their favour, and particularly from those who are so well able to judge. I shall certainly have a pleasure in accompanying you to your farm, or to any other where information is to be had. I shall be glad to take in the magazine you mention, and if I knew where it is to be had in London, I would direct my bookseller to get it.

Our season, not only for the wheat but for all other grain, at the time of blowing, was very favourable; and though the former is in many parts thin upon the ground, yet I think the crop will be good, if Providence gives us a good harvest. This observation is not confined to Kent, but as far as I have come northward. I am glad you have such powers of refitment at Leith, as it

must contribute much to the activity of our cruisers.

Mrs. Noel unites with me in kind remembrances to your father and Mrs. Thomson. Colonel Noel is in town. I shall probably be here for near a month to come, but shall apprise you before I set out and of the route I take. In the meantime I am

Dear Sir,

Very sincerely yours,

CHAS. MIDDLETON.

ON THE STATE OF THE NAVY¹

[Draft.]

April, 1803.

There has been so much said and written of late on the state of the Navy, and the ignorance of those who direct it, that I am induced, from the papers I have by me, to give a view of its progress in building and repairs, since the commencement of the American War, when I was appointed Comptroller of the Navy.

At that time I found the dockyards empty of stores, the total value therein not amounting to £500,000, and our number of serviceable ships very inadequate to our wants. The only remedy I could devise was building to as great an extent as possible, during the war, in the merchant yards; and repairing as fast as possible in the king's; a measure that will be found, from what is stated in the sequel, to be of equal expediency in time of peace, as in time of war, and to which too much attention cannot be paid. The want of ships and the necessity of constant repairs fully employed

¹ There are several drafts of this, or parts of this, in Middleton's own writing. It is here printed from a revised copy in a clerkly hand.

our artificers, and kept us, for the four first years of the war, under great difficulties.

It was at this time that I recommended to Lord Sandwich the coppering of our line of battle ships, as the only means of augmenting our force. His lordship liked the measure, but thought it too bold to be adopted without his Majesty's concurrence. For this purpose I accompanied him to Buckingham House, when his Majesty, on being informed of the means used to prevent injury to the iron work, immediately saw the propriety of the measure and approved of it. Having, in consequence of this approbation, secured all the copper at the different mines, at the then market price, we went immediately to work, and in a few months produced upwards of thirty sail of the line, and more frigates, swimming on copper; and by the end of two years more, the whole fleet was coppered. The measure may have been said to have increased the services of the fleet [by] one third, and was the means of preventing more than one of our line of battle ships (the *Ardent*) from being captured during the whole of the war, notwithstanding we had more than two ships to one opposed to us—French, Spanish and Dutch.

As soon as the peace was concluded, we agreed with the merchant builders to suffer the ships then building to continue on the slips to season, and went to work with all our force in repairing the best conditioned ships in the king's yards; and in order to increase our shipwrights and caulkers, we entered, before the war ended, upwards of 250 apprentices for the most deserving of those classes. By these means, we were prepared for repairing the fleet as soon as it was paid off, notwithstanding which it will be seen by the sequel how long it was, even with all these precautions, before the whole

could be gone through, and rendered fit for service again.

It must be observed that at the end of a war which employs the whole fleet, there are few in so good a state as to be employed again without considerable repairs. This was the case in 1783, as we had by means of temporary repairs for home service (a thing never known before) employed every ship in ordinary that could swim, which answered the purpose we proposed, and enabled us to maintain a very formidable appearance at home and abroad. This has again happened towards the close of the late war, when the necessity of opposing the Northern confederacy in 1800-1 rendered it necessary to equip every ship that could possibly go to sea.

It has been found from experience that ships whether new or in good condition, will require repairs in the course of ten years; and that, with all our exertion from the year 1783 to 1789, and with only 18,000 seamen employed, and those mostly in guard-ships, we could not bring forward, by repairing and building, more than ten sail of the line annually in the king's yards. It is therefore evident that no expense should be spared in time of peace, in building and repairing, until a proper number of ships are completed; as you will otherwise have those first repaired falling bad upon your hands before the number necessary to be kept up are finished.

As an illustration of this, it has been found that out of 127 sail of the line, built or thoroughly repaired during the ten years that the peace of 1783 lasted, not quite eighty of these have been found in good condition, at the end of that period.

It has been a sad neglect during the late war, not to continue building line of battleships and

frigates in the merchant yards, especially as so large a proportion of our present fleet consists in ships captured from the enemy, which experience has proved are not so lasting as those of our own build; besides our ships are now so very much increased in point of size, that the same force of hands, and quantity of materials, will not keep the same number of ships in repair, that they would have done when the ships were of smaller dimensions.

I shall now proceed to state the effective naval strength of the country, and of the different branches of the service on which it depends, during the period when I was comptroller of the navy, and compare it with the present state of these matters as far as I have materials for the same; pointing out, in the sequel, what measures appear to me requisite to put the navy again on a respectable and permanent footing.

Date.	No. of line of battle ships reported in good condition including those in commission.	No. of shipwrights employed in all the different dockyards.
31st Dec. 1766	56	3143
" 1773	63	3155
" 1783	68	3260
" 84	81	3141
" 85	91	3136
86	104	3125
87	116	3082
88	124	3059
89	131	3023

Comparative statement of the number of ships building and of the number of shipwrights

employed in the yards in the first years immediately succeeding the Peace of 1783 and that of 1801.

Year.	Ships of the line building in the		Frigates building in the		No. of shipwrights employed <i>in toto</i> .
	King's Yards.	Merchants' Yards.	King's Yards.	Merchts' Yards.	
1783	13	29		54	3260
1802-3	15	9		5	

The number of seamen voted as the peace establishment in 1783 was 18,000 and those mostly in guard-ships; in 1802—50,000 and those mostly in ships at sea.

From this foregoing statement it will be seen that at the peace of 1783, we had forty-two sail of the line building, the greater part of which were in the merchants' yards; to which add eight sail of the line (put in afterwards and finished in the king's yards by the year 1789), together with sixty repaired therein within the same period, it gives a total of ninety-seven ships of the line, either new, or which had undergone such a thorough repair as to be fit for immediate service, together with all their stores in a complete state of readiness.

At this period (the year 1789 when I quitted the navy board) the quantity of stores in the dockyards had been increased from below £500,000 to upwards of two millions, of which more than 80,000 loads of timber constituted a part.

On the commencement of the late war	Loads.
the stock of oak timber in hand was	82,900
At the beginning of 1802 it was . . .	49,200
The average consumption of timber for	
the last three years has been . . .	28,000
The average of timber purchased in the	
same period has been	16,000

If fewer ships were built in the king's yards, and more repaired, much larger timber might be saved, and many ships be prevented from falling into decay and brought forward in time.

It was my intention, in this state of affairs, and had the reports of the commissioners of enquiry been carried into execution (as I required), to have only asked for £200,000 to be granted under the head of extra for the succeeding years of the peace. The estimates, however, continued to be formed without any regard to the then state of the navy, and the quantity of stores in the dockyards; and my successor demanded £400,000 on the head of extra, grounded on the opinion derived from the dockyard officers, whose extravagance is unbounded. My estimate was formed on the prospect of the fleet being completed in 1791, and very little extra continued.

The best remedy for the present state of affairs appears to me to be: to build six sail of the line and ten frigates annually, in the merchants' yards; to enter more shipwrights immediately, and allow the whole to work two tides extra in summer, and one in winter, and to confine the king's yards to repairs only; with the exception that it will be proper to set up on the slips, as many of the largest ships (say first and second rates which are never built by contract) as the slips will contain, keeping them in a progressive

state with a few gangs of men, till they are in frame; when they remain to season, until the number of repaired ships and those building in the merchant yards, make up 100 sail of the line, and then finish the first and second rates, as timber can be had and men can be spared from the repairs. For it is incontrovertible that if 3117 shipwrights, the average number employed during the last peace, with the extra then in use and with only ships in commission for 18,000 seamen and those mostly guard ships, and with the greater proportion of the ships building under contract in the merchants' yards—if these could only bring the fleet into a thorough state of repair in six or seven years of peace, in what time is our present fleet, vastly increased in the size of the ships, as well as in point of numbers—principally however by those captured from the enemy, and which require more repairs than our own ships—with ships in commission for 50,000 seamen, and those cruisers in constant want of repair, with only [blank] instead of 42 sail of the line building, and those principally in the king's yards—I ask in what time are 2900 shipwrights (the number actually in the dockyards in March 1803, and those not allowed to work extra), in what time are they to get through the repairs of the fleet, so as to put it in the same good condition it was in when the late war broke out in 1793? This certainly requires the serious consideration of everyone interested in the existence of the country as a maritime state.

MIDDLETON TO J. D. THOMSON

[Holograph. Extracts.]

Teston. 18th July, 1803.

My dear Sir,—I think you judged right in waiting the arrival of Captain McNeil before you returned to Scotland where I understand very little is doing towards the defence of the country. I dread this supineness more than I do the attempts of the French. This country is certainly able to defend itself if the force is properly called out and disposed of; but if our rulers are inadequate to the government of the country in the critical state we are in, it is difficult to see what the issue may be. If Mr. Pitt was first minister, and proper men to act under him in the several departments, I should have no doubts in my own mind of success; but seeing, as I do, great promises daily made in the House, and little progress in our armaments, I own my apprehension to be great and my confidence small. . . .

Mr. Pitt, I understand, wishes for some conversation with me on defensive operations; and as this would naturally lead to the state of the navy, I could much wish for the abstract in Mr. Derrick's¹ papers before we met. I cannot possibly however be in town before the 1st; but on this subject you will be silent . . .

[Holograph.]

Teston. 22nd October, 1803.

Dear Sir,—It is a long while since I heard from you and I have been in daily expectation of being able to tell you how our threshing machine answered,

¹ Charles Derrick, a clerk in the Navy Office, and author of the well-known *Memoirs of the Rise and Progress of the Royal Navy*.

but workmen's promises and excuses are endless. It is however nearly finished and from the short trial we have had, I think it will answer very well, but as soon as it has been completely tried you shall have the particulars. I wish much to know how Mrs. Thomson does, and what prospect you have of her recovery, and whether you have had any satisfactory intercourse with her family ; also how your father and children are.

I have observed in the papers some strong observations concerning your scarcity of ships. This is a subject which occupied my thoughts very early, and ministers were made acquainted with them and how the defect might have been remedied. It is not enough to say that Lord Keith will judge, if he has not the means of carrying his judgment into execution. I have always insisted that numbers of flat boats can only be destroyed and dispersed by numbers of ships and those not of the smallest kind. Brigs and cutters will do but little execution amongst such numbers and may be boarded and carried if not judiciously managed. Bonaparte has had remarkable fine weather for his operations, but I conclude he is as much behindhand as we are in preparation, and if he defers it till the spring, I should hope we shall have little to fear as to this island. It may be otherwise with Ireland, where I have no doubt an attempt will be made before it is long, and some feints here to divert us. I wish the Sunday exercising could have been prevented, as I see the bad consequences of it even amongst my own servants.

I have read a pamphlet called a Treasury one, bearing hard on Mr. Pitt. Mr. A[ddington], I hear, disclaims it, but this will not be easily believed. I perceive too, the opposition are

coming in by degrees, so that I conclude we shall have strong debates as soon as the country is out of danger. My fears are not lessened on the state of the navy, and excepting 6 frigates, I see no means taking for building or keeping up our number of effective ships.

Our autumn has been of a piece with our summer, both uncommonly fine; but our turnips have universally failed and mutton must be accordingly [dear] in the spring.¹ . . .

Believe me with much esteem,

Dear Sir,

Affectly. yours,

CHAS. MIDDLETON.

MEMORANDA OF ADVICE

Forethought and Preparation.

[*Very rough draft in Middleton's writing.*]

[May, 1804.²]

There is nothing more true than the old saying that preparation is half the business; and in order to exemplify it, I will beg a few minutes of your lordship's attention while I relate the means which were used to recover the fleet when it was in as great a state of weakness as it is at present, and all the powers of Europe against us. The time will not be totally lost, my lord, as

¹ A part of the sheet has here been torn off, and the sense of the rest of the letter is imperfect. This is of the less consequence as it relates entirely to private matters.

² These memoranda, written on single half-sheets of foolscap (watermark on all '1801'), some of them in two or three different editions, and with many corrections, bear neither name nor date; but the sense of them shows, almost beyond doubt, that they were intended for Lord Melville, on his appointment as First Lord of the Admiralty, in May, 1804. Cf. *post*, p. 273.

you must have the same to go through if your present seat should prove permanent, and with less means to accomplish it. I never had a turn to scheming, my lord ; and whoever will take the trouble of looking over my property here¹ will easily perceive that usefulness, and not fancy, has been my sole guide in improvements. To those who do not comprehend a subject in all its bearings, every proposition will be received with suspicion, and whoever is the proposer of new regulations must of course submit to be thought a projector. I had been twelve² years comptroller of the navy before I communicated to the commissioners of inquiry my ideas of the then state of the navy office and the advantages of carrying on the business at the navy board by committees ; and they were too much men of business not to see at one view the impossibility, in its extended state, to be conducted otherwise. I have never changed that opinion, and I will venture to say that every man of business in the office will agree with me in the propriety of it ; but the changes that were to be made would have obliged idle commissioners to have attended in their places instead of leaving their offices to their clerks ; and the consequence was ignorant people's opinions prevailed against mine, and a hornet's nest was raised about me and rendered what I had been years in preparing, of no effect.

When Lord Sandwich proposed to me being comptroller of the navy, I was very little known to his lordship and therefore hesitated, and required some little time to consider of it. I was

¹ Presumably Teston.

² He was, roughly, twelve years comptroller, altogether ; but had been little over eight when he gave his ideas on the state of the office to the commissioners of enquiry. See *ante*, vol. ii. p. 232.

at that time captain of a ship of 90 guns, and the war not begun. I loved my profession, and had offered to copper a fifty gun ship at my own expense if the admiralty would agree to it. At this time, ships were not coppered; but they ordered a trial to be made of the Jupiter, and I was removed into her. It was not the prospects, however, that opened from these circumstances, nor the emoluments and honours which many of my brethren of the same rank have since possessed, that made me hesitate; but the truth was, I felt myself unequal to the magnitude and consequence of the office and the confinement it would occasion me. Lord Sandwich, however, encouraged me to accept, and I succeeded Captain Suckling as comptroller of the navy. Having naturally a methodical turn of mind and not unaccustomed to business, I soon perceived, as Lord Sandwich told me, the weak state of the office, and the supineness that prevailed in every part of it. The American war was scarcely begun; and as frigates and small craft were the only ships in request, the want of line of battle ships was not felt at that time.¹ America had no fleet; and if our small cruisers had been properly stationed, we should have required no others to bridle their trade and prevent any interference or communication with other powers.

France, however, taking advantage from our misconduct, showed an inclination to inter-meddle; when it became necessary to commission more of our line of battle ships, and in the end, to

¹ Writing, apparently from memory, of the state of things, twenty-six years before, Middleton is here inaccurate in the details, which, however, do not affect his general argument. Cf. the dates given, *ante*, vol. i. p. x, with those quoted in *Journal of Bartholomew James* (N.R.S. vi.), Introd. pp. xii, xiii.

bring forward by degrees all that could be made fit for service. The number at this time did not exceed 40 ; and the amount of stores, in all the dockyards, was under £500,000 value.¹

On the declaration of France, the first object was to repair and fit out every line of battle ship that could be made fit for service, and to encourage the merchant yards to build new ones ; to replenish our stores and make them equal to the very great demands that must necessarily be made upon them ; to repair our docks which were in sad decay, to enlarge our storehouses, to furnish our foreign stations with great supplies of stores, and to increase our shipwrights and caulkers by every reasonable encouragement, and particularly by allowing servants,² in a large proportion, to deserting men.

The advantages that arose from foreseeing what would be wanted in our foreign arsenals may be seen in one of Lord Rodney's letters after his action with the French fleet, wherein much damage was done and nothing wanted to refit them. The French had now embarked in the war and the Spaniards also. Our exertions by this time enabled us to bring into commission 84 sail of the line, full stored, besides frigates and sloops ; but notwithstanding these efforts, we were still deficient in strength ; the enemy outnumbered us upon every station. Further exertions were still wanting to prevent our being overpowered by numbers ; and new measures must have been hazarded to face the enemy with any degree of success.

I knew perfectly well the character of sea

¹ He is here understating, rather than exaggerating, the terrible deficiency. Cf. Keppel's *Life of Keppel*, ii. 19 seq.

² *Sc.* Apprentices.

officers, and how ready they were to complain of the civil departments when anything could be found amiss. But with Lord Sandwich's support, and getting the surveyor on my side, I determined on a measure that had never been before attempted—and which was, to bring every ship in ordinary into service of some kind or other; to listen to no excuses, but to double and patch them up so as to make them equal to temporary and home services; and by reducing their masts and weight of metal, they served to the end of the war as part of the Western Squadron¹ and made part of the fleet under Lord Howe which relieved Gibraltar. To bear down all remonstrances I visited the great yards myself, and with the surveyor, examined all the ships that had been laid up and amongst the rest the Royal William, built in Queen Anne's time and never had been at sea. By this expedient we increased our line of battle ships in commission from 104 to 108; and which must be submitted to again, if this war is lengthened.

To add to our difficulties, the Dutch also took part against us,² and the Channel had been in the possession of the French and Spanish fleets for some days³ and the Western Squadron for want of numbers was obliged to retire to St. Helens. Your lordship must have remembered at that time the gloom that overspread the country; and there remained but one resource that I could

¹ It must not be forgotten that one of these sank at her anchors, at Spithead; and that a year before, V.-Admiral Parker had bitterly complained of being sent to fight the Dutch on the Doggerbank with worn-out and rotten ships. There is, however, no doubt that the plan Barham is speaking of was the best that could be adopted—in the circumstances.

² In all this there is a curious confusion of dates; the combined fleet had possession of the Channel in September, 1779, the rupture with the Dutch was in December, 1780. It does not, however, affect the argument.

think of to save us from invasion. I had considered the subject well ; and from every information I could pick up for guarding iron bolts in ships' bottoms against the corrosive effects of copper, I was convinced in my own mind that we might with safety copper the bottoms of every ship in the fleet and by that means increase our activity, as far as doubling our force in numbers. The measure to be sure was not only bold, but arduous. I proposed it privately to Lord Sandwich ; but he hesitated and, after several conversations and assurances, he mentioned it to the king. I afterwards accompanied his lordship to Buckingham House and explained the whole process in so satisfactory a manner that he conceived it at once and ordered it to be carried into execution.¹ Having succeeded so far, I authorised our copper contractor to purchase whatever quantity of copper he could procure from the several companies, and which was executed so privately that we secured as much as would cover 40 sail of the line without any increase of price, and actually coppered twenty in six weeks, and, before the war ended, every ship fit for service. The effects of this measure were soon felt ; and so much was the activity of the fleet increased that Mr. Rigby, in his witty way, observed that, unless the captains were coppered also, we should have none to serve. Admiral Barrington, amongst others, declared that the ships would sink at their anchors. They were ignorant of the means used ; and so far were we from meeting accidents, that the enemy had not a line of battle ship of ours in their possession to boast of at the end of the

¹ There is certain proof in these papers, as well as elsewhere, that the king did pay the closest attention to even the minute details of the service.

war, while many of theirs had, in consequence of it, been added to ours.

The war being ended and the shattered condition of the fleet well known to me, I saw the necessity of getting forward as fast as possible with our line of battle ships; and notwithstanding we had upwards of thirty new ones in a state of great forwardness, yet, without continued exertion in every part of the department, we should not be able to cope with France and Spain united. The first thing, therefore, was to take in hand, immediately, all the ships that were in want of small repair. We were by this time, strong in the number and quality of our shipwrights and caulkers; the stores were greatly increased, and all our storehouses arranged with separate berths for every ship's stores; so that instead of having all of the storehouses looked over for single ship's stores, every ship had the power of carrying off her own in 24 hours, instead of weeks, according to the old custom. The general storehouses, instead of having the new stores thrown over the old, as had been customary, to the utter destruction of the latter, were fitted with receiving and issuing rooms for each article, and the oldest expended first. Timber was procured for the several services; and such was Mr. Pitt's liberality in the grants, that by the time I quitted the navy board we had upwards of 90 sail of the line fit for service, and all their stores ready for putting on board. Hospital ships, port-admirals' ships, and receiving ships, which were the first wanted, had been invariably left unprovided, and of course interrupted and kept back our fitting ships for the sea, were all provided; and as many old 40-gun ships coppered and converted into transports as would contain 4 or 5,000 men. The advantages arising

from these preparations are incredible in the hands of an active administration. The having so many ships prepared for sea, and everything else that belonged to them, ready; the having coppered transports of our own instead of waiting for hired ones, and upwards of £3,000,000 in necessary stores in our arsenals, gave such advantages that the fleet, in my successor's time, was fitted out with a rapidity never known before, and the credit of it imputed to him who had scarcely warmed his seat.

I don't mention this by way of taking credit to myself, but to show the advantages of forethought and preparation in every kind of business and more particularly in naval matters. By such means an enemy is overpowered before he can prepare himself; whereas the prepared one has his whole force of artificers at liberty to increase his strength, and which must be always attended with success. I need not add how much I was mortified after all the pains I had taken to increase the fleet, and provide for every future contingency, to be prevented from forming the office in such a way as would have secured these advantages and introduced order and economy into every branch of the service, not by any sudden revolution nor any harsh means, but by introducing regulations that would have gradually reached every abuse and disorder that had been creeping into it from time and the natural increase of business. There was not an officer belonging to the yards at home or abroad, nor a clerk in office, whose duties I had not drawn out with my own hands. Some of them had been carried into execution by the authority of office; but the greater bulk waited the result of the report of the commissioners of enquiry. My pride would have been to have finished the whole,

and left it as complete as it could be from an experience of 12 years' unremitting labour and noting down every defect and abuse as they occurred during a long war and the hope of remedying them when the peace was established.

What I have mentioned is not a tenth part of what went through my hands, and except the small place which I procured for my brother through your means, I never solicited a favour. It was not owing to temper but disappointment, that I quitted the office ; it was always my intention to do so, as soon as the new regulations were established, and I had pawned myself to take the whole upon myself until the machine was set agoing. If I had continued in my professional line it would have been better for my family ; but seeing so fair an opening of serving the country so much more in this important and extensive branch of service, I submitted my opinion to that of my friends, and should have thought myself fully rewarded if it had succeeded. You are come to the admiralty, my dear lord, with a few advantages and many disadvantages.¹ The dockyards, storehouses and docks are in pretty good order and will require nothing but attention to keep them so ; the artificers are not much reduced, and may be easily kept up with proper encouragement ; the reports of the commissioners of enquiry are partly carried into execution ; they have been sadly garbled and altered, to the views of interested individuals ; the committees, however, though nearly overturned by ignorant men, still remain ; and if you can provide proper men

¹ In noticing the somewhat patronising way in which Barham speaks to Lord Melville (if it was to him) it should be remembered that though of the older generation, Melville was actually sixteen years younger than his cousin.

for the heads of the several departments, you may still reap benefit from this institution.

The comptroller of the navy is an office of such importance, that I know no man within the sphere of my acquaintance equal to it. He is the main-spring belonging to everything that is naval; no price can purchase a man fit for this extensive office; he must be in every part of it and know everything that is going on, in and out of it. The twelve years that I presided at the board, I never was absent one day when the public letters were read; it was by such perseverance that I gained so intimate a knowledge of the business, and whoever will not do the same is not a fit person to fill it. A good set of officers, therefore, is the first thing to be attended to as vacancies offer, and nothing should stand in the way of procuring them.

If the war goes on, you will have everything to do that I have pointed out in this paper, and with very slender means to accomplish it. A cruising fleet, constantly in service, must sink unless you can find a succession to relieve them. For want of professional skill, you will find it difficult to combat the many objections that will be made to bringing out the old ships and using inferior timber, and unless this is firmly supported you must be undone. By possessing professional knowledge and a general information from long experience in office, I bore down all opposition and did not even consult those who were to execute the business. I therefore warn you, my lord, against insinuations and opposition.

I have examined the navy progress and return it directed to Mr. Marsden. The prospect is not worse than I expected, and if the last two admiralities had ordered line of battle ships to have been

built in all the merchant yards who had the capacity of building, and promoted the means of procuring timber instead of discouraging it, I should not have blamed them. But, when I look at the progress, and find only three ships of 74 guns building in all the merchant yards, and all their powers at this critical moment employed on 50 vessels which, for maintaining the empire of the sea, I could never trust, I am utterly astonished. It is evident their minds were not of the comprehensive kind, and their views did not reach beyond the daily occurrences of office. I am hopeful it is not yet too late to recover our situation; but it will require uncommon exertion in every branch of the service; and for this purpose men of knowledge in the business must be employed in every department of the service, and neither rank in life, nor birth, nor country should stand in the way, when integrity and ability are to be found.

Timber

Every channel should be immediately opened to procure an immediate supply, and increase of price allowed, if necessary, for speedy deliveries. Entailed estates, crown lands and king's forests should be made to contribute. Purchases should be made abroad through our consuls and merchants; and where it might be purchased standing, to remain so till there is a general peace; what can, in the meantime, be brought home, may be done through neutrals or English ships, as may be most convenient. The surveyors of the navy must cordially agree to substituting elm, fir, beech and any other timber for oak, where it can be used;

and such builders as promote these means in the dockyards to be rewarded and encouraged. The contracts for timber to be relaxed and the contractor not to be obliged to keep to proportions of trees, trenails, thickstuff, &c., as such restrictions only serve to delays in the delivery and may be purchased separately. The purveyors who go out to examine timber, to have the power of agreeing with country gentlemen and others who may have small quantities to sell ; and the receipt of such timber to be made as easy as possible at the nearest yard.

Ships in Ordinary

No ships that can be made fit for temporary services, to be sold or broken up on any account, without a survey being taken by one of the surveyors and two of the youngest builders of the adjoining dockyards. Such ships, when brought into service, to be fitted with masts and guns of inferior size to their proper ones, and a reduced complement of men ; to be commanded by young post-captains. The ships wanting small repairs to be taken in hand first, and others in succession ; and as often as the refitting ships and the quantity of timber will admit of it, to employ men on the ships ordered to be built.

Dockyards

The shipwrights ought to be increased by every possible means ; and servants allowed to the most deserving men, with reasonable restrictions as to earnings. They ought to be allowed to work job on ships under repair, by which much time will be gained and the shipwrights pleased.

Commissioners at Dockyards

The duties of these gentlemen have been very much [mis]understood. It is to see that the orders of the navy board are punctually carried into execution ; to have a general superintendence over every person's duty ; and particularly, to examine into the storehouses, &c., and see that the officers are strict in their receipts of stores, and that the patterns are regularly received from the navy office and frequently compared.

Sundays

In the heat of the American war, when all the maritime powers were against us, we never worked on Sundays in the dockyards, except on very extraordinary cases, such as docking and undocking ships when spring-tides offered on that day ; and I am persuaded, that, besides the bad example of such a practice, nothing is gained by it in forwarding the service ; men who work task all the week require rest on the Sundays. I forbear saying anything on the breach of a commandment which, in its consequence, may have more influence on the good and bad success of our measures than we are aware of. I never did attend office on those days for common business ; and whoever directs the machine will not find it necessary, if it is kept in order and he attends to it on the week-days.

Navy Board

This board is of the first consequence in carrying into execution the various and important duties committed to their charge. The comptroller ought to be a man of great professional knowledge,

of strong health, great integrity and a complete master of business. He ought never to be absent at the reading and minuting of public letters; nor an order given, or a letter of any consequence dispatched without his particular signature. It is the office of next consequence to the first lord of the admiralty, and he ought to be so completely master of his business as never to be at a loss when called on for information in his department. I can safely say, that during the twelve years I presided at that board, the public letters were all read and minuted in my presence, and when the variety of other duties which fell to my share are considered, no man that followed me can have a pretence for blinking it. The commissioners ought to be men of application to business and have their proper places in the committees.

MEMORANDUM

[*Very rough draft in Middleton's writing.*]

[? May, 1804.]

Qualities necessary for the person who is intrusted by the first lord in that line of business which disposes of cruisers, convoys, &c., and provides for secret services.

He should be a perfect master of arrangement. Without this, he must be in continual perplexity, misemploy and lose the force which is put under his direction. He should be deeply skilled in practical professional knowledge, so as to know, from a sloop to a first-rate, what each is capable of performing, the time it will take to fit her, the services she is most capable of performing and what time is necessary to perform it in. In preparing convoys for general services, he should have

his ships in such readiness as to be at the rendezvous by a given day, so as to prevent the merchant ships or store ships being kept in demurrage, or troops detained when ordered on any particular expedition. The sums of money that may be saved to the public and merchants by such punctuality is incalculable, and the success of expeditions must very much depend upon it. In keeping ready a succession of ships for any particular service, he must look beforehand, and not trust to chance for their being ready when wanted. I mention forethought and preparation as the pivot on which every kind of success must depend; and I am the more particular on this subject because I can easily make it appear that both in the last and in the American war, the greatest part of our misfortunes proceeded from a want of these qualities in those who directed the war. No hurry nor activity can make up for the want of these essentials; and whoever possesses them must succeed.

The difference of expense, too, between having everything prepared or having everything to seek at the moment it is wanted, is not to be calculated. In all business that requires secrecy, he must communicate with the comptroller of the navy, so that no article of preparation may be wanting in that great line of the service. The same care must be taken in sending out an ample supply of stores and provisions to the place of destination. The same care must be taken in keeping up a proper supply of stores on every distant station, so as to prevent a waste of public revenue by unnecessary purchases abroad, and to enable the admiral to have the full benefit of the ships under his command. To ensure this he must keep up a constant confidential communication with the

comptroller of the navy, and take care that he is furnished with proper authority as soon as the services can be divulged.

He ought, if possible, to be acquainted with every branch of the civil departments, as the navy office is the great repository for all naval matters, and the board, the channel through which every kind of preparation is executed. He must make himself particularly acquainted with the best stations for the cruisers to be employed on, not only for the protection of our own trade, but also for annoying the enemy; and the ships destined for this service should not only be the fastest sailers, but such, in numbers, as to afford a constant relief, and the station never left unguarded for want of them. To prevent captains stretching beyond their stations for the prospect of prizes, their journals should be frequently examined. He should be impartial in the stationing of cruisers and exchange them frequently, so as not to keep officers too long in disagreeable stations when the service will admit of a change.

He must attend constantly at the public reading of letters at the board and keep an abstract of each as they are read. The assistant secretary should do the same, but this will come more properly under his respective duty. By means of this abstract he will become master of all the correspondence, and secure punctual answers to the letters. He will minute himself on the letters belonging to his own line, and the sea officers will do the same on theirs. By this means the secretaries will be very much eased, and have time to expedite the execution of the minutes and examine the answers.

MEMORANDUM BY LORD MELVILLE

[Copy.]

Wimbledon. 3rd July, 1804.

I directed the accompanying statements to be prepared in the form they now appear, that I might know with perfect accuracy the real state of the British navy as it now stands, with reference as well to the immediate calls upon it, as with a view to its progressive improvement to meet future contingencies. It is my duty to communicate the result of my investigation, for the information of his Majesty and his confidential servants.

When I stated, in a former memorandum, that we had nothing to apprehend at present from the fleets of the enemy, I rested my opinion upon the clear superiority we possess over them in every quarter. This will be evident on a comparison of the last return of the disposition of our fleet at sea with the latest intelligence of the amount of the fleets of our enemies Nos. 1 and 2. I am aware, however, that a mere comparison of numbers would exhibit a fallacious view of the subject; because the enemy's fleet, laying in their ports, are liable to no wear and tear, and the addition of every ship they bring forward is a real addition to their strength, whereas the unexampled blockade of the enemy's ports we have so long and unremittingly carried on, must create a proportionate decay in the efficiency of our fleet, and renders it necessary¹ to preserve our superiority in numbers as unlimited as it is in every other respect. This consideration becomes of the last importance from the intelligence we receive that the government of France, to all its other exertions,

¹ *Sc.* 'For us to exert ourselves if we mean. . . .'

is omitting no means of adding to its naval strength. A late information I received from a person who was an eye witness at Antwerp of the fact he reports in No. 3, is of itself a proof of the system which France means to pursue.

In stating what I have now done, I take it for granted I will not be so misunderstood as to have it supposed that the superiority of the British navy rests solely on its superiority of numbers. The skill, valour, and enterprise of our officers and seamen are the essential ingredients of our naval pre-eminence; and, in this point of view, the system of our enemy remaining in their ports, while our force is constantly at sea, must operate substantially in our favour, in so far as it adds to the skill and alertness of our seamen, while at the same time the seamen of the enemy are making no additional acquirements in that respect.

There are certainly great differences of opinion as to the system of unremitting blockade, which has of late been adopted. Perhaps, as in most other cases, the argument on both sides is carried on to an extreme. It is not, however, my intention at present to enlarge upon that discussion, but I think I am warranted in assuming it as a proposition to be acted upon, that, if the enemy's ports are in any material degree to be blockaded, there must, for that purpose, be such a number of ships as to admit of the blockading ships being relieved regularly in rotation, and that the relief of the respective ships should not at any rate exceed more than three months; and, to give perfect security, it appears to me that the portion of the Channel fleet appropriated to the blockade of Brest ought to be double of what is requisite for the actual blockade.

I rest that opinion upon the ground that

although much may be done in that way, it is impossible to be certain that, with all our vigilance, the French fleet may not escape the blockading squadron. If, after they have escaped, the admiral in command is to have recourse to loose conjecture or vague intelligence as to their destination, it is clear that much time is lost, and much mischief may be done. To prevent this, a fleet equal to half the number of the fleet off Brest, should be stationed off the coast of Ireland, and a similar number on the coast of the English Channel.

If this distribution is made, the British commander off Brest, in the event of the enemy's escape from that port, has only to make the signal for one half of the fleet under his command to repair to the rendezvous on the coast of Ireland, and himself to repair to the rendezvous on the coast of England with the other half; and by such an arrangement, whether the enemy direct their attack on the one or the other, they will meet with a superior fleet to resist them.

This species of arrangement seems to be so obvious and unexceptionable, I am sure nothing but a defect of ships to accomplish it can have prevented the adoption of it; and, for my own part, I shall never consider the naval defence of England and Ireland to be completely taken care of, till that system can be arranged and adhered to.

All I have hitherto stated has had a reference merely to our present enemies; but we should be short sighted indeed, if we did not look upon the fleet of Spain as added to the force of our other enemies, at any moment it suits the interest of France to call upon it for that purpose. I trust I may consider it as very improbable indeed, that

in the present war we shall have likewise to encounter a confederacy of the Northern Powers ; but that additional embarrassment has oftener than once come on this country when it did not look for it, and there is no certain security against it, except being prepared to meet it.

After what I have said, and taking under my view the state of the fleet as it now exists, I express without any reserve, the conviction with which I am deeply impressed, that at no former period in the naval history of this country, were exertions for the improvement and increase of our naval strength more essentially necessary than at the present moment, and those exertions must not be on a scale¹ to answer the exigency of the moment ; they must be systematically begun and adhered to, without interruption for a long track of years.

It requires some detail to point out the present state of our navy ; and first, with regard to ships of the line actually in commission : we have five first rates, 10 second rates, and 66 third rates—making in all 81 sail of the line. This in point of numbers exhibits a powerful and tremendous navy, and is undoubtedly an overmatch for the united fleets of France and Holland consisting of 70 sail of the line.

In order to render the information on this subject accurate, it was necessary to analyse the state and condition of the respective ships, which could only be done in a satisfactory manner by investigating them when they had been last in dock and what was the nature of the repairs they had received, and for what number of years their service ought to be reckoned upon. This accordingly is exhibited in one view by the statement

¹ *I.e.*, merely sufficient ; must not be limited to a bare sufficiency.

No. 4; and upon an examination of it the result is, that out of the 81 ships of the line now in commission, 37 of them are estimated fit for service for five years, and 26 of them for only three years, and 18 for home service; and therefore provision must be made not only for the current repair of all ships in service, but for a fresh supply of serviceable ships of the line, to fill up the places of those become unfit for service at the end of the specified periods.

This fresh supply must arise either from the ships in ordinary, from the ships ordered to be built and building in his Majesty's and the merchant yards, or from new ships to be hereafter laid down. No. 5 is a list of the ships in ordinary, distinguishing within what time it is supposed they may be brought forward for three years' service after they can be taken in hand. It is impossible to speak with precision on that point, because it depends on what calls there may be for the docks and artificers for the execution of such current repairs as may be necessary for the ships in commission. The number of line of battle ships in ordinary is 32. No. 6 contain the names of the ships building in the king's and merchants' yards. They are 18 in number and will be coming progressively forward; I am afraid that in most of them a great deal of progress has not been made as yet. Every exertion must be used to get them forward; but with regard to them and every other object of naval exertion, we must be much limited by the deficiency which may exist in the amount of our naval stores.

Our remaining resource for the increase, improvement, and ultimate establishment of the British navy on its proper and permanent basis must arise from the building of new ships, and I

conceive that to that resource, in the present state of our navy, there can be but one limitation, viz., the powers of the country and the means of carrying into execution the building of large ships, either in the king's or merchants' yards. With a view both to our present exigencies, and to be able to meet future contingencies, we must, for some years, live on expedients. We must take first in hand those ships that can be repaired in the shortest time after they are taken in hand. We must have recourse to every substitute in order to spare our best timber, and we must be contented with less permanent repairs than what would satisfy us in less pressing moments. In short we must bring forward the utmost number of ships for service for the next few years, and we must at the same time not neglect progressively to bring forward, by new building, such a supply of ships as may repair any omissions we may have been guilty of, and produce such a fleet at all times to the other Powers in different parts of the world, as will satisfy them of our firm determination to preserve that naval pre-eminence we have so long possessed, and without which we cannot exist as a nation.

It will be observed that in the details I have hitherto given, I have confined myself to line of battle ships, because I conceive it is in those we will be found most backward; and if we are successful in bringing forward a due supply of ships of that description, I am not under apprehension of not being able to bring forward the due proportion of ships of a smaller size. And the paper No. 7 has been prepared on the same principle as No. 4 and exhibits a similar view of all ships of inferior rates as is detailed in No. 4 with regard to ships of the line.

It may be satisfactory to know what are our immediate prospects for the present and ensuing

year. No. 8 is a list of a very useful supply of ships of different descriptions which will come forward within a month. Of these there are 3 ships of the line, and in addition to these, within the present year we may reckon on the nine additional ones contained in No. 9. No. 10 is a list of those ships which are reckoned upon early in 1805; and although I cannot speak with precision, I think it probable the ships in ordinary may be reckoned to be coming forward annually and progressively at least in an equal proportion.

The existing supply of naval stores enters so essentially into every calculation I can form on this subject, I addressed the letter No. 11 to the comptroller of the navy, and No. 12 is the return I received. In a conversation with the comptroller of the navy, he assures me that I may depend on every other deficiency being perfectly within the certain reach of the means of the navy board, excepting the great article of oak timber. As this is a consideration of so much importance, and the whole maritime strength of the kingdom depends upon it, I propose in a few days to bring the whole subject in a separate discussion under the view of his Majesty and his confidential servants.

The Lists referred to in the foregoing Memorandum are, for the most part, wanting. What there are, are either not dated or are of a year later, and all have so many undated corrections that their historical value is extremely small. Their contents and meaning, however, are sufficiently indicated in the text of the Memorandum. An abstract of the numbers under 4 and 7 is here given.

No. 4.

Navy Office, 20th June, 1804.

A list of line of battleships in commission, specifying the state and condition of them

(whether at home or abroad), their different stations, time when last undocked, and the repairs they then received.

No. 7.

Navy Office, 27th June, 1804.

A list of ships of 56, 50 and 44 guns, frigates, sloops, and other vessels in commission, specifying their state and condition, different stations, time when last undocked, and the degree of repair they then received.

SHIPS OF THE LINE OF BATTLE

Guns	5 years	3 years	Home	Total
114-100	3	2	—	5
98	7	2	1	10
80	1	3	1	5
74	24	12	12	48
64	2	7	4	13
Ships of the Line	37	26	18	81

FIFTY-GUN SHIPS AND FRIGATES

Guns	5 years	3 years	Home	Total
56-50	4	3	3	10
44-40	1	3	6	10
38-36	20	20	7	47
34	—	—	1	1
32	8	11	7	26
Frigates	29	34	21	84

SMALLER FRIGATES AND CORVETTES

Guns	5 years	3 years	Home	Total
28	—	1	4	5
26	—	1	—	1
24	2	2	1	5
22	—	1	1	2
20	2	1	—	3
—	4	6	6	16

SMALL CRAFT, &c.

Quality	5 years	3 years	Home	Total
Sloops . .	27	36	23	86
Gun Boats .	24	5	11	40
Cutters, &c.	1	3	8	12
Bombs . .	5	6	6	17
Fire Ships .	—	—	2	2
Troop Ships	—	2	11	13
Storeships .	—	6	7	13
Yachts . .	1	—	4	5

EFFECTIVE FORCE OF THE NAVY

Ships of the Line of Battle	81
Fifty-Gun Ships	10
Frigates	84
Small Frigates and Corvettes	16
Sloops	86

Lord Melville to Sir Andrew Hamond

No. 11.

Admiralty. 14th June, 1804.

[Asks for a return of 'the amount of naval stores of every description annually requisite for the supply of the British navy,' assuming as the datum on which the report is to be formed, 'an extent of naval strength equal to what this country was in possession of on the 1st February, 1801.']

Sir A. Hamond to Lord Melville

No. 12.

Navy Office. 19th June, 1804.

[Enclosing the return asked for, as well as a statement of the amounts in store. The return is very detailed, and it is unnecessary to print it in full; but it should be noticed that of nearly every article the amount in store was far below that of one year's consumption. Of hemp, for instance, the amount considered as annually requisite is given as 14,935 tons; the amount in store as 9,609. Canvas annually requisite, 95,585 bolts; in store, 20,563. And similarly for other articles. The annual cost is estimated at £2,866,000: which in time of war may be considerably exceeded.]

LORD MULGRAVE¹ TO MELVILLE

[Holograph.]

Downing Street. 13th September, 1804.

My dear Lord,—The Neapolitan envoy has exhibited the utmost anxiety for the safety of their Sicilian Majesties and their family, in consequence of the British line of battle ship, which has been so long in the bay of Naples, having been removed. Lord Nelson states that, without the express orders of government, he cannot weaken

¹ Foreign Secretary.

his fleet by detaching a line of battle ship ; I beg therefore to know whether your lordship can assign, without inconvenience to the general service, a line of battle ship of any description to be ready to bring away their Sicilian Majesties in case the French should march to Naples ; or whether Lord Nelson's force is such as to justify orders to him to keep a line of battle ship constantly at Naples.

I am with great truth and regard. . .

MIDDLETON TO J. D. THOMSON

[*Holograph.*]

Teston. 5th December, 1804.

Dear Sir,—I have just received yours and Mr. Fordyce's, and shall send you such scraps as the subject suggest to me and which you will keep by you and when acted on to run the pen through it.

I observe what you say concerning Lord Melville and Mr. Fordyce, and am very indifferent who are the members, so that they are great men and such as will not interrupt us. The business must be done by Mr. Fordyce, myself and you ; so that having more company at the board will be rather a hindrance than otherwise. This information I shall give to Fordyce and also to Lord Melville.

I am aware there will be great jealousies, and on that account I wish you to confine your confidential correspondence to Lord Melville and Mr. Fordyce. I can have no interest in the issue, and therefore power cannot be abused by me. The boards we have to do with are all interested less or more ; and although I wish to have every kind of assistance from them, yet I see much inconvenience in their being acquainted with particulars before the proper time.

I shall be very glad to have the inferior officers ready, but we must not hurry matters, nor promise too much. In the mean time, bring forward the first with all safe expedition, leaving nothing behind. I have burnt your note, as I shall all others of a similar nature.

I am very glad Mr. Fordyce embarks and he is much pleased with you. I find too he has got a house. As soon as a fair copy of the superior instructions or even a rough one is made out, you will ask his advice as to arranging the articles and mending the language. You will also show him the naval instructions and also the transport ones as a hint for arrangement. This is all that strikes me at present, but I shall continue writing as things may occur. You will, from these scraps, show Mr. Fordyce my meaning.

Yours very faithfully,

CHAS. MIDDLETON.

Mr. Gambier goes up on Saturday, but to say the truth, company is a sad interruption to business. I will return the inferior officers' instructions as I go through them.

I shall come up in due time.

You must keep an account of postage.

J. D. THOMSON TO MIDDLETON

[*Rough copy. Autograph.*] Thursday, 6th December, 1804.

Dear Sir,—I wrote you last night, and you would perceive, under some anxiety. This is now removed in consequence of a conversation I have just had with Lord Melville of the most satisfactory nature. His lordship assured me, that every facility would be given to the commission;

that he had the king's most decided sanction to the measure, who most cordially agreed in thinking it one of the best that could be proposed, and that it was in vain even to expect so desirable a measure could be undertaken by any one of the boards immediately connected with the executive branches themselves. That any jealousy on the part of individuals who might feel themselves affected by it, was totally beneath his notice and would meet with no encouragement. Mr. Pitt has been out of town the whole week, and which has prevented his lordship from bringing forward this as well as other pieces of business which required his opinion. He desired me to say that it was entirely owing to Mr. Pitt's unexpected absence from town that he had not written to you as he intended when he saw me last, but that you might expect to hear from him, however, for certain, as he was to see Mr. Pitt on the business to-day, although it would be too late to write by this post. Had he not seen me he would have written a few lines to-day to say so. I hope you will fully approve my having put Lord Melville in possession of what I saw very plainly was going on at a certain place, and that his lordship was entirely satisfied with my conduct. I have the best proof by his having desired I would dine with his lordship to-day and endeavour to get Mr. Fordyce to meet me, which he has agreed to do.

MIDDLETON TO J. D. THOMSON

[Holograph.]

Teston. 10th December, 1804.

Dear Sir,—I have always been in the habit of writing short minutes and leaving them to be modified by the secretary or writing clerk; by

this method, I generally kept beforehand in my business, and of course was prepared against sudden and unexpected calls. My memory, too, being bad, I never trusted to it, but entered every thing of importance in a book, and scratched through the article when it was executed. If you never tried this method, you will find it useful and lead to great correctness. I observe what you say, and shall keep my minutes separate from my letters. I cannot be at the plague of keeping a list of letters, but as I foresaw how heavy my postage would be in consequence of this office,¹ and in which I have not been deceived, I desired Lord Melville to get me exempted from postage as long as I continued in it, and which I could wish you to do likewise, as we shall otherwise have a great deal to pay in the course of our enquiries.

I hope the office is getting ready without much expense, and that you will try to get me a stable near the spot. . . .

[Holograph.]

Thursday, 13th December, 1804.²

Dear Sir,—I have gone through the inferior officers' instructions and shall return them on Saturday by Mr. Gambier. I recollect perfectly well, that the instructions contained in the Digest are those alluded to in the warrant of January 1783, and it may do very well to repeat it with a little variation. I heard from Mr. Fordyce yesterday and sent him the preamble, as it struck me, for his amendment. You have been very diligent in copying the inferior officers' instructions, and there seems nothing wanting but a careful

¹ In another letter (not here printed) he complains of having had to pay 8s. 2d. postage for a packet.

² Thomson has endorsed it '17th December'—presumably the day he received it.

examination, and, in some short articles, a fuller explanation. The employment of the clerks in the several offices in the dockyard, as practised by Mr. Peryn, clerk of the check at Plymouth, would be desirable, and may be wrote for when the circular letter goes ; instructions may thereby be formed for their guidance.

A doubt arises in my mind how we can save time in receiving information from the inferior officers ; for as many of these are dead who made the returns in January 1783, we shall have many contradictions in the answers to be received, if left entirely to themselves. To obviate this, I should prefer sending out rough instructions to one of the yards, with our questions annexed, desiring them to send their answers to the navy board ; and transmit them from yard to yard till the whole is received. This will save time and prevent our being obliged to send a separate set for each yard. The questions may be such as we agreed upon. If you agree with me, one set of instructions for the superior officers should be got ready to send off as soon as we have received our commission. I don't know whether I make myself intelligible ; but if not, I will explain it to Mr. Gambier.

Friday.

I have just received yours enclosing the remaining instructions and shall return them soon. I approve very much what you have mentioned to Lord Melville and wish him to believe that we act together in perfect confidence. The jealousies you mention will have the effect of excluding any commissions being of the new commission. Hope, we can very well do without ; and I see the impropriety of his being from the dockyard. I

am not so clear as to Mr. Gambier, from his being on the spot ; and I cannot believe he would ever take a part in opposition to any measure I was engaged in. Lord M., however, and Mr. Pitt will judge for themselves, and I shall readily acquiesce in whatever they may agree on. I am much pleased with your conversations with Lord Melville and particularly with his openness. Mr. Gambier is not returned from Chatham, but goes to town to-morrow.

Yours very faithfully,

CHAS. MIDDLETON.

I shall send to No. 332¹ till you inform me otherwise. I am glad the king approves ; it will greatly facilitate matters, and ought to pave the way for their promised bounty to me, as well as give dignity to the commission.

[*Rough copy, Autograph.*]

22nd December, [1804].

Dear Sir,—I have not looked at the report of the first commissioners of enquiry since I quitted the navy office. I left it in disgust and threw all the papers I had drawn up in a corner. If these reports had been referred to a candid, disinterested commission, such as is now intended, and the digest book brought up, there would have been no need of the last commission. I told both Lord Melville and Mr. Pitt, as soon as they returned to office, that if the reports of the first commission had been fairly dealt with, they would have reached every abuse in course of time and without noise or opposition ; for I had offered to arrange the whole myself, and which you will find done amongst my papers, and to take all the odium

¹ 332 Strand, was Thomson's address.

attending it. It is a fair and complete collection of the business carried on by the navy board and its several branches. They had my hearty assistance throughout the whole, and the only reward I looked to was to have the satisfaction of leaving the office properly regulated, and to be at liberty afterwards to pursue my own concerns which required my presence.

On re-perusing the reports, all the circumstances come fresh into my mind, and as far as I recollect, I recommended Lord Melville to read these reports as the best history now extant of the civil departments of the navy. But whoever examines the whole, and considers how long they lay a dead letter in the council board and afterwards at the admiralty, where they were dragged forth by myself and afterwards by Mr. Abbot, and will follow their progress, as garbled at the admiralty, and what they ended in at last, must see that the whole was a political job and which I was the dupe of.

The last 6th report¹ was of the same nature; and except task work, it possesses nothing new, and can only be called an imperfect abstract of what had been so ably done to their hands by the first commissioners. Weak as our powers are compared with former commissioners, I think some good may be done; but if to be referred, as the former ones, to boards not yet reformed, it will end as before. When I think of these things I almost despond. Politics mix with every thing and therefore nothing is done as it ought to be.

If I had been suffered, in the present instance, to choose my own colleagues without animadversion,

¹ It was issued on 1st May, 1804.

I would have been responsible for the whole; but being teased with objections to this man and the other, I am become almost indifferent to the issue. I shall, however, do the best I can with members that can be of no use, and make up as well as we can what is wanting. I want a carpenter and they send me a blacksmith—sad work—but after all, as long as we have Mr. Fordyce I shall be content to try.

Yours very sincerely,

CHAS. MIDDLETON.

I observe the commissioners of yards' instructions are more particular than ours, but not essentially so. The commissioners abroad may be considered when these branches come under our notice. Mr. Stephens gave the first reports the name of my reports, and in which he was not far wrong. This, however, was not the real objection. We had self-interest to contend with in every office.

[*Holograph.*]

Sunday, 23rd December, 1804.

I have received a letter from Lord Melville. I hate altercation and dispute and have therefore acquiesced in his nomination, laying a stress on Mr. Fordyce being next to me in the commission. I am sorry he cannot come down, but I hope he may do so in the spring if we are all well.

Yours sincerely,

CHAS. MIDDLETON.

The commission, by embracing so many objects, will never end in my time.

[Holograph.]

Tuesday, 2nd January, 1805.

Dear Sir,—I have received yours and am glad the commission is getting forward. I am now employed in making out instructions for the comptroller, deputy comptroller, surveyor and secretary, but they cannot be completed until we have their answers or the particulars of their duty as now practised. I shall next take in hand instructions for the committees; but this must rest, till I know what parts of the duty of the office are committed to their charge. As I propose Mr. Fordyce and myself to take charge of the navy office and dockyards, the other departments will naturally follow our lead; and as soon as the members who have charge of them acquaint themselves with the arrangements of the business, there will be no difficulty in carrying on their parts of it.

The papers are very civil to us, but they don't like to give up Lord St. Vincent's share of the merit, although he certainly had no clear view of the business; and whatever his intentions might be, it would have been impossible to have carried them into execution without a new regulation of the board and all its branches.

I shall be in town, God willing, as soon as the commission is out; but at present, I can employ myself much more profitably here than anywhere else; but without the use of the Digest Book I am frequently put to a stand.

The precept to General Bentham's office should accompany the commissioners of the navy.

Yours faithfully,

CHAS. MIDDLETON.

MEMORANDUM BY LORD MELVILLE

[Signed.]

Wimbledon. 5th March, 1805.

In the year 1795 there was a very urgent demand for an immediate supply of seamen, and a very general investigation took place as to the most effectual and practicable measures for accomplishing that purpose. The paper herewith sent is a compendious abstract of the various suggestions then under consideration. Some extensive effort is perhaps now more necessary than it ever was, for having a rapid supply of men for the service of the navy; for although, by the last returns, we have about 108,000 seamen and marines, that number is greatly inadequate to the exigency of the present moment.

The number of small craft which the nature of the war, particularly in the North Seas, renders necessary, absorbs a great number of very useful seamen. To our ships of the line at present in commission, amounting to 83, a very great addition is necessary if we mean, as I take for granted is the case, to preserve our naval superiority on a scale of security adequate to every contingency which circumstances may produce. It will require very gigantic and vigorous exertions to accomplish it, but I trust, in the course of the present year, about 30 sail of the line may be brought forward in addition to the ships now in commission. It is unnecessary to add, that the most successful exertions for the purpose of producing ships will prove abortive, if we do not, by a proportionate exertion, obtain a sufficiency of strength to man them.

I have premised this much to impress his Majesty's servants with a conviction of the

importance and urgency of the subject to which I am obliged to direct their attentive consideration.

From various suggestions offered in the year 1795, some few collateral ones may be selected by way of regulation, in aid of other more digested and extensive plans ; but after the most mature consideration I can give to all of them, it appears to me that the only rational and productive plan which was suggested at that time, is that which calls on ship owners, in proportion to their tonnage, to provide for the service of the navy one, two, or more seamen. Their not being permitted to sail till they have made this provision, will be sufficient inducement to their best exertions to produce their quota ; and there can be no doubt that their acquaintance with and knowledge of all the seafaring men living in the same port and neighbourhood with themselves, affords them ample means of performing this service. The ship owners may, if it will make the measure more palatable, be allowed some bounty for the men they furnish ; but in reality they will have no reason to complain if they should not receive any, for it is very justly observed by those who suggest this measure, that the ship owners would repay themselves for the expense it costs them, by an advance on the freight of their voyages ; which is, in other words, indemnifying themselves by a remuneration levied from the pockets of the consumers.

Whatever decision may be formed upon the expediency of allowing any compensation to the shipowners for their exertions in providing their quota, the usual bounty should be paid by the public to the seaman when he gets on board the ship where he is to serve.

I am sanguine in my expectations that this measure is liable to no serious objection, and ought

to be palatable to the trade of the country, for it will be highly advantageous to it. It will have a manifest tendency to diminish the great burden to which the commerce of the kingdom is subjected by the exorbitant wages they are obliged to give to their seamen. This necessity is in a great measure created by the competition which must take place in time of war between the naval and commercial services of the country ; but that competition would cease if every vessel, the moment its owner had made good her quota, were furnished with a protection against all interference with her crew till the return of the period in the year when a further proportionate quota might be called for. Seamen would not have reason to ask or to expect such high wages, because they would, without any dread of molestation, pursue the line of their occupation the whole year, in place of losing half their time in skulking and running away under the panic of a press gang.

On this subject I beg to refer to a small publication¹ which has been put into my hands. I do not perhaps concur in all the ideas it contains, but there are several things in it worthy of attentive consideration. The general principle is the same as that which I have endeavoured to enforce, and the statements are peculiarly deserving of attention which tend to prove the great benefit which the shipowners, in various shapes, would derive from the adoption of the plan which I am recommending to the consideration of the government.

I cannot precisely state the number of men

¹ This refers to a small pamphlet (12 pp. 12mo.) entitled *A Plan for Manning the Navy, without Impressing or Expense to Government*, by P. Holland. (North Shields: printed by T. Appleby, 1804.) The correspondence of its ideas and its juxtaposition in the letter-book make the identification practically certain. See also *post*, p. 80.

which might be expected by having recourse to this measure ; but so soon as it is determined what is to be the quota produced for every 100 tons, the probable amount of shipping may be easily ascertained by having recourse to the general register of the shipping and tonnage of the United Kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland.

There is another measure, in addition to that I have stated, which I am extremely anxious to suggest with the same view of securing a speedy and certain supply of men for the navy ; and the basis of what I wish to propose is, the abolition of protection of every description and the adoption of a measure which has been often in contemplation ; I mean a registration of the seafaring men of every description belonging to or resident in any of the ports of Great Britain or Ireland. When the number is in this manner accurately ascertained, it will not be controverted by any person that out of the whole number, the naval service should, in preference to every other demand, be amply supplied. The independence and security of the empire itself, and of course the protection of the trade of the country, and every other subordinate or collateral interest, rests on the assumption of this proposition as an undeniable maxim. The question then arises : By what means a competent number for the supply of the navy can, at all times, be speedily obtained and secured for the public service.

The mode of obtaining men by the impress can never be abandoned as a principle. It is now interwoven into the usage of the navy, and our sea-faring men are habituated to the practice, founded upon this general maxim—that every person entering upon the profession of a seaman does virtually engage himself to be, at all times,

liable to the call of his country in preference of all other service. This system, therefore, must never be directly abandoned, however much it has been, and always must be the disposition of the executive government to modify or suspend the practice, when it can be done with safety to the public service.

The registration of seamen being completed, and the number belonging to each port accurately ascertained, the amount wanted for the public service can only be selected by ballot, in proportion to the number registered at each port. The ballot should, in my opinion, comprehend every person gaining his livelihood by water, or in any respect connected with the naval service. In this latter description I comprehend shipwrights and ship artificers of all kinds, persons employed in navigating craft, or keels, boats on rivers; as also those employed on canals or inland navigations communicating with any sea port or arm of the sea. The person on whom the ballot falls either to serve in person or to find a substitute.

It does not escape my recollection, that the various and extensive public services which of late years have rendered it necessary to have recourse to ballot, has, to a certain degree, brought that mode of levy into discredit—I think unjustly; but whether I am right or wrong in that opinion, the objections do not apply to the present question. In the first place, all sea-faring men have been industriously exempted from all other kinds of ballot on the ground of their service being otherwise appropriated to the public; and if any of the persons I have proposed to comprehend within the ballot I have suggested, are not already entitled to exemption, it will, of course, be extended to them, if this measure is adopted.

In the next place, it is material to observe that there is a manifest distinction between a ballot for seamen and every other species of ballot. By law and usage as it now stands, every sea-faring man is liable to be impressed into the public service; and if any are exempted from it, the exemption is founded on indulgence, and that indulgence must cease the moment the public exigency suggests the propriety of doing so. The consequence of this taking place would be to subject every sea-faring person, without distinction, to the impress. A selection therefore by ballot, or any other modification of the impress, is a benefit in place of being a hardship on the profession of a sailor. I hold this to be true in principle; and I am sure, in practice, a selection by a well regulated ballot will be found to be a great relief both to the seamen individually and to the general interests of the country, both with respect to its naval service and its commercial relations.

As my intention at present is only to give a general outline of my ideas, without entering upon details, I trust what I have stated will be sufficient for that purpose. I beg, however, to observe that I would wish, in point of time, that the contribution from the tonnage of the kingdom should take place at the commencement of the year, and the levy by ballot five or six months later, to supply any deficiency that may arise from the first measure. Upon this point there may be some degree of uncertainty from the trading ships not having returned from their voyages at precise days; but they will do so progressively, and as their quota in each year must be found previous to their clearing out on their first voyage, the measure would, in a year or two, find its level, and leave little doubt as to the permanent result of it.

I would further observe that when the two different measures had taken effect at their respective periods, neither the individual ships which had supplied their quota in the manner proposed, nor the body of the seamen at large would entertain the smallest apprehension of further molestation in the course of their occupation; for the board of admiralty is perfectly aware of the full number the public service will require, in addition to what they now have. It is perfectly known at any given period of the year, from a review of the average number of casualties which may happen, joined to the knowledge of the ships which are coming forward for commission, what number of seamen of different descriptions are requisite; and this of course would be answered to the public and perfectly known at the commencement of the year, before any of the proposed measures were practically acted upon.

There is another subject so essentially connected with every proposition which has in view the manning of the navy, I cannot refrain from mentioning it, although it is not my intention, in this memorandum, to enter upon a detailed consideration of it. I allude to the necessity of speedy revisal of the situation of the petty and warrant officers serving in his Majesty's ships. We may obtain seamen, and by strict discipline we may conceive ourselves enabled to keep them in awe; but it is well known that the chief desertions from the navy take place among the prime seamen from whom these petty and warrant officers are selected, and upon whom the safety and discipline of the ship chiefly rests. Although, therefore, they may be obtained by means of compulsion, it is only by rendering their situations comfortable, both immediately and prospectively, that we can

rely on their zeal and fidelity in the service of their country. It is my intention at a very early period to bring this subject under the view of his Majesty's servants.

There may be differences amongst respectable naval officers as to the extent of the remedy that may be requisite, but I believe there is no real difference in sentiment that something effectual must be done.

MIDDLETON TO LORD MELVILLE

[Copy.]¹

Teston. 17th March, 1805.

My dear Lord,—To attack an admiralty² on the score of neglect, that has not been more than six months in their seats, can only be meant to shift the burden from their own shoulders in case of enquiries; for in any other light it is folly in the highest degree. The mischief was done before the present admiralty came into office; and the question now is, to whom shall we impute the blame? When the last admiralty went out, what was the state of the fleet as to building and repair? what were the means left for keeping it afloat and capable of service?

If they had left as many ships building and repairing in the king's and merchants' yards as would have enabled their successors to carry on

¹ Written by an ignorant, illiterate clerk, not improbably a servant, with many blunders and omissions, which are here very timidly corrected.

² This refers to the attack on the admiralty made in the House of Lords, by Lord Darnley on the 14th March (Hansard, iv. 18). After some talk, he confined himself to moving for copies of certain papers, to which Lord Melville raised no objections.

the war with vigour and success, and they have been found negligent in the use of them—this would have been a serious charge. But if, on enquiry, it should be found that but a very few were contracted for in the merchant yards, and not more coming forward in the king's, and that more might have been procured from the former at £26 per ton instead of £36, which our necessities have obliged us to accept, to whom are we to impute our disappointment and the false, ill judged economy that has occasioned it? If to this neglect and bad judgment we add the almost total want of oak timber in the dockyards and the small quantity contracted for, the difficulties that were thrown in the way of receiving it by regulations [which], though highly judicious in time of plenty, [are] yet very improper in a moment of scarcity, the fault will be found to lay with former admiralities and not with the present. If it can be proved the present administration, on finding the state of the navy to be what I am afraid to describe, had set down quietly in their chairs and suffered the burden which their predecessors left them to increase, they would have been open to much censure; but if it can be made appear that, from their first meeting as a board, every measure has been taken to remedy the want of forethought in their predecessors; if it can be made appear that the preparations that are making and the energy in execution exceed any former period, they will be found to deserve the thanks of the House and in no instance exposed to censure.

I have served many years in a public station and I do declare that for the six months the present admiralty has been in office, I never remember so many judicious measures brought forward for the benefit of the navy, nor anything

like [the] energy with which they are carrying into execution at present ; and I will venture to affirm, if your lordship is permitted to carry into execution the measures now in hand, that the navy and every department belonging to it will be in a better state than it ever was known to be at any period since its first establishment.

The repairing ships in the merchant yards has never been resorted to, but in cases of absolute necessity, and confined to frigates only ; the navy board are not ignorant of the evils attending it ; and although I always reprobated it in my own mind, yet necessity forced it upon us in the American War, and it was put a stop to as soon as we could procure a sufficiency from our own yards. It is the same now as to line of battle ships ; you are short in number for the various services for which they are wanted, and must use every possible means to increase the number ; when that desirable object is attained, you will of course give over purchasing India ships and repairing line of battle ships in the merchant yards ; but till then, you must make the best use you can of the merchant builders ; that is, building at all times when numbers are wanting and repairing only when necessity requires it. If the dockyards are short in the number of their artificers, to what has it been owing ? In some degree, to the unavoidable necessity of being obliged to give high prices to the merchant builders. This has always been the case in time of war in the eastern yards, from their vicinity to the capital ; the diminution in the western yards has, in common with the others, been owing to other causes—I mean the too sudden discharge of the old artificers and putting them on pension, at a time when the dockyard gates should have open to every degree of

artificer for the immediate repair of the fleet. Some of the first men, too, were discharged at this time on the score of mutiny and discipline and which ought to have been looked over or modified till a better opportunity offered.

The rigid measures that were pursued at this time would have produced much good to the service if they had been delayed till the peace was established ; and I am persuaded Lord St. Vincent must have thought it secure when he attempted this method of reformation. On any other ground, it was madness and imbecility in the extreme. Your lordship, in answer to these motions in the House of Lords, will naturally meet them with the number of ships actually building and not nominally so, in the king's and merchants' yards, when you came into office ; with the quantity of timber in hand and contracted for at that time, and now. These returns must, I think, make it evident where the neglect originated and the impossibility of doing more than has been done to correct it. In other matters it may be improper to come to particulars, at present ; but it may be safely asserted, that if a few months credit be given, there will be more improvements brought forward in both the civil and military parts of service than have ever been thought of for a hundred years past.

Lord Darnley, small craft.—Those employed by the former admiralty were of bad construction, though probably the best they could procure ; many of these have been discharged and more useful ones put in their stead ; this is a reason for their not increasing in number, though very much in usefulness ; the same practice is carrying on at present. The valuation of ships purchased is

always calculated by the opinion and judgment of the professional officers in the king's yards. The taking India ships into the service is a case of necessity and the only ships of force that could be had on a short notice. They had answered the present purpose in taking the place of line of battle ships in stations of defence and convoys, and will make excellent store ships when their present services are otherwise provided for. The instance of one going on to St. Helena, when most of the India ships were obliged to put back, is a proof of their not being so inadequate to this kind of service as was supposed.

The price given for building ships in the merchant yards is certainly very high, but to whom are we obliged for this seeming extravagance, but to those who refused offers made at £26? I have no doubt after the regulations now forming are completed, that we may be able to build 74s. in the king's yards at £25 per ton, but not at present. If at £21, as Lord Darnley affirms, why not carried into execution? If for want of means, the argument falls to the ground; if that want was owing to neglect, it must be imputed to the former admiralty and not to the present. As to officers of ships, the fault is generally owing to their own ignorance; and in nothing more than in the stowage¹ of iron ballast, which injudiciously placed will make the best constructed ships shift. This will be remedied in the new instruction. I have always desired your lordship to put very young captains into purchased ships and such of our own as are fitted for temporary service; you will [find] many good consequences attending it.

¹ The MS. has 'storage,' which seems nonsense; but the whole sentence is curious.

The calling for the number of artificers in Deptford and Woolwich yards must be to shew the decrease of numbers in those yards, and which must naturally be the case so near the capital, where high wages are given. This will be imputed to the high prices given to the merchant builders on the king's account; but even in this point of view, the labour of the men is not lost to the public and will cure itself. If you look back at the American War, it was precisely the same till we increased our number of apprentices, and which is about to be done soon. As to classing of the workmen as proposed by the builders of Plymouth yard, it will appear at first sight unanswerable, but when enquired into by professional men it becomes doubtful. I am, however, not quite satisfied with the reasoning of those men, and it will certainly come under our consideration.

The commission set on foot for naval enquiries is certainly a judicious one and I hope it will be continued as far as naval officers are concerned, and even go into the admiralty; for till that department is new arranged, it is impossible to conduct its own [duties] with energy and still less those of the many departments under them. If a committee was nominated to enquire into the civil branches of the navy during the last 3 or 4 years, it would fall very heavy on Lord Spencer as well as Lord St. Vincent. The neglect of keeping up the fleet originated in the time of the former, and was left so low as to put it out of the power of the first ability to recover it whilst the war continued; this, however, is no excuse for neglecting to provide the proper means; but forethought is a sure talent and very seldom possessed; without that quality, added to method

and unremitted application, no man can have a title to being called a man of business.

I am, &c.,

C. M.¹

P.S.—As to the commission of which I take a share, it is the wisest that could have been devised if followed up with firmness and judgment. For want of such a commission all former enquiries become as dead letters, and the parts acted upon so extremely indigested as will oblige us to propose an alteration of them. Thomson accidentally dined in company with Mr. Tucker, who was so kind as to bestow the highest encomiums on me, for my conduct at the navy board and the labour which, it appears by the minute, I took in keeping the engine moving. By working task and job, the public receive at least one half more of the labour of the artificers; and when properly arranged, will, I doubt not, render the merchant yards useless to us, except in the beginning of war, when it ought to be a general rule to contract with them for line of battle ships. In war, Portsmouth and Plymouth must be reserved for keeping the fleet in order; but I have no doubt in my own mind that building also may be expected from them, when the regulations now proposing are carried into execution.

MIDDLETON TO LORD (?) MELVILLE

[Chatham Papers, 365.]

Teston. 16th April, 1805.

My dear Lord,—I flatter myself, I shall not appear selfish in disturbing you at present, but

¹ In Thomson's writing.

having no other friendly means of communicating my wishes to Mr. Pitt, I trust to your kindness to excuse it.

I have no other wish towards the admiralty but to secure the peerage to myself and family, and to be assistant in carrying into execution the many salutary measures you have begun and which must be lost if not followed up with zeal and perseverance.

The admiralty has no charms for me, further than to serve and promote these objects ; and but for the promise that was made to me through yours and Mr. Pitt's friendship, no consideration would have brought me back to encounter fatigue and labour in a public office.

The opportunity that offers at present to secure me the peerage must be obvious to Mr. Pitt, and it would be a reflection on good sense to suppose his Majesty would be adverse to bestowing a mark of approbation on my many years services, and coming out again in the decline of life, at the desire of his ministers.

To put these services on a footing with parliamentary support is a mortifying consideration to those who have spent the best part of their lives in serving the public. I shall hope, however, from your kindness towards me, that you will represent this statement in its proper light, and procure Mr. Pitt's recommendation to his Majesty for granting me the peerage. Your lordship will recollect that, having lost your powerful support, the commission I am in, if I find myself equal to it, will require additional distinction.

I remain, . . .

CHAS. MIDDLETON.

MIDDLETON TO J. D. THOMSON

[*Holograph. Extract.*] Teston. Wednesday, 17th April, 1805.¹

I take it for granted the admiralty is at market in the way of negotiation, and if that does not succeed, it will be offered to me. If they would give me what they have promised, I would rather be without it, but to say the truth, I have no anxiety about it.

[*Holograph. Extract.*] Saturday Morning, 27th April, 1805.²

I conclude I am to take the name as soon as it is in the Gazette. Pray enquire what is the ceremony of being introduced in the House of Lords: and if and when it is necessary? You will pay any fees necessary on this account.

Maidstone. Monday, 29th April, 1805.

Dear Sir,—I have sent you, through Mr. Marsden's care, a number of rough notes intended for the admiralty, and which I beg of you to arrange properly and mend the language. I find there is a clerk attached to the first lord's secretary, paid by the board, so that we shall want no assistance in that line, and [may] probably get assistance from [him] in an evening, in office of revisal. It may be necessary for you to keep a list of all vacancies which happen abroad and how filled up. The application book must be made full in point of information.

I shall hope to see you to-morrow and remain,

Yours very faithfully,

CHARLES MIDDLETON.³

¹ So endorsed by Thomson.

² So endorsed.

³ This letter, signed 'Middletton,' is franked 'Barham,' so that it would appear he got definite news of his peerage on this day, between closing and posting the letter.

LORD HAWKESBURY TO BARHAM

Whitehall. 17th May.

Lord Hawkesbury presents his compliments to Lord Barham, and in answer to his note acquaints his lordship that, as first lord of the admiralty, he has his Majesty's permission, amongst the other great officers of state, to pass in his carriage through the parks.

LETTERS, PLANS AND MEMORANDA
RELATING TO ORGANISATION AND
ADMINISTRATION*Lord Granville Leveson Gower*¹ to *Lord Mulgrave*

[Copy.]

St. Petersburg. 25th April, 1805.

My Lord,—I have not yet received any official answer to the enclosed note delivered by me to Prince Czartoryski, but I think it my duty to lose no time in informing your lordship, that I learn from Admiral Tchitchagoff, the minister of the marine, that the Russian Government will not object to the construction of ships of war for his Majesty's service in the imperial dockyards. Admiral Tchitchagoff recommends that an agent should be immediately sent by the L.C.A. authorized to settle with the Russian government the regulation of the details necessary for carrying into effect this proposal. He informed me that Archangel is the only port where spare timber can be afforded; and that at that dockyard, such as

¹ At this time, Ambassador extraordinary; later, first Earl Granville.

is already seasoned is fit only for the construction of frigates, and smaller vessels. He thinks it desirable, in order to avoid any dissatisfaction at the manner in which the work is executed, that they should be built under the superintendence of an English ship-builder, and I have the satisfaction of adding that, from my conversation with Admiral Tchitchagoff, I have reason to believe that every facility will be afforded by the marine department here, towards the execution of a measure which promises to be mutually beneficial to both countries.

CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

[P.R.O. Admiralty Minutes, No. 256.]

Admiralty. May, 1805.

Whereas the present very extended scale of the naval service requires the greatest economy of time to keep the business of it under, it is Lord Barham's intention to make such a distribution thereof as may, on the one hand, secure a punctual discharge of all its duties, while on the other hand it will make the performance of it easy for the lords themselves.

Business of the Board

The first lord will take upon himself the general superintendence and arrangement of the whole.

First Sea Lord

The senior, or first professional lord, will do the same when the first lord is absent.

His duty will also be to attend to the correspondence of the day, but more particularly to

that of the ports and all secret services. He will minute all such orders or letters as come within his department and he may see necessary, and deliver the same to the secretary to be acted upon. He will with the approbation of the first lord, dispose of the movements of all ships on home and foreign stations and give orders and instructions to the admirals, captains and commanding officers of ships on service. He will distribute the seamen and marines in such a manner as may be most convenient and useful to the service. He will attend particularly to the equipment of all ships and vessels of every description and examine frequently the navy weekly progress for that purpose.

In order to check any deviation from orders in cruisers or others—he will, when necessary, examine admirals', captains' and other commanders' orders, and compare them with the journals of those officers, noting every deviation therefrom.

He will take an account of all promotions made at home and abroad, so as to correct any irregularities in their appointments. The third lord to state vacancies of captain and lieutenant to first lord and in all cases where he does not interfere. The utmost regard to be paid to the justice and other circumstances attending it, as also to the character of the claimant. The first lord will sign all commissions in cases of promotion.

Second Sea Lord

The second professional lord will receive from the secretary (after they are read) all the letters or other papers belonging to the navy board, transport, victualling, sick-and-hurt boards, and Greenwich hospital, and minute those which have been determined on and return them afterwards to the

secretary, so that they may be dispatched ; such as require deliberation, to be acted on as soon after as possible. He will keep up an intercourse with the heads of such boards when information or explanation is necessary.

Third Sea Lord

The third professional lord will superintend the appointment of all commission and warrant officers, under the inspection of the first lord. Such as have been without ships from shipwreck or capture, to be preferred, after examining certificates. No officer (excepting the carpenter) to be appointed to ships building or under a long repair. No gunner to be appointed until he has passed the usual examination nor carpenter or boatswain who cannot write and keep accounts.

When new appointments are necessary the first lord to be acquainted. The first lord will sign all first commissions and warrants.

To keep the ships in service complete in their officers, so as to avoid acting officers being employed, and the numberless surveys and accounts which must be the consequence of it.

Civil Lords

The civil lords, in order to keep the professional lords uninterrupted in the various important duties committed to their charge, will sign all the orders, protections, warrants and promiscuous papers daily issued from the office. They will also assist the board with their advice.

When any member desires to be absent, he will assign his part of the duty to another member who will naturally undertake it.

BARHAM.

Order

[*Barham's Autograph.*]

The Board having taken into consideration a practice lately introduced of indulging captains having seats in Parliament to be absent from their ships, while other captains are acting for them, and which not only creates much irregularity, but a heavy and unnecessary expense to the public: Resolved that no member of Parliament whose ship is under sailing orders or ready for sea, shall have leave of absence from his ship while under these circumstances.

To be sent to commanding officers, Portsmouth, Plymouth, Sheerness, and other ports.

Minutes of Order

[*Barham's Autograph.*]

Admiral Drury in case of discovering any French force, by cruising or otherwise, to send immediately, with intelligence, a vessel to Lord Nelson at Lagos Bay, and another to Admiral Cornwallis at home.

Lord Nelson and Admiral Cornwallis to be acquainted.

Admiral Cornwallis to send three sail more of the line to the Downs with every possible dispatch.

To be done immediately by letter, and orders, where necessary, will follow.

Lord Barham to Mr. Pitt.

[Autograph ; press copy.]

21st May, 1805.

¹ I have read all the papers that have been put into my hands and agree entirely with Mr. Holland, who has published a small tract on the subject of raising men for the navy.² I would however wish that for the present that part of the plan which comprehends tonnage should be the only one carried into execution at present.

If this be approved, Mr. Holland, with the assistance of some person of the law, might be employed to draw up an Act for obliging all merchant ships and vessels, comprehending inland navigation, should be obliged to supply men to the navy at the following rates : viz., 1 able seaman, under 40, for every 250 tons, or 2 young landmen, to 30, for each seaman. No ship or ships to be allowed to sail till this has been complied with. Such ships as have found their quota, to have protections and on no account, except entry into the king's service, to be subject to the press, till their return from a West Indies or others parts that may be pointed out in the Act.

If no time is lost, a number of men might be raised for the present occasion ; and whoever is conversant with drawing up Acts of Parliament will, with the assistance of Mr. Holland, be at no loss to execute this plan. As soon as the Act is passed, I should propose officers to be sent round the principal seaport towns to explain it

¹ Though dated as a letter, written out fair and signed, it has no formal beginning or ending, and must be considered rather as a memorandum ; an opinion strengthened by the extreme incorrectness of the language.

² See *ante*, p. 61 n.

to the merchants and ship owners, and afterwards carry it into immediate execution.

I don't see why the manufacturing towns should not contribute upon the same kind of principle, putting men in the stead of tonnage. A bounty may be allowed.

BARHAM.

*Lord Barham to W. Pitt*¹

[Autograph draft.]²

22nd May.

My dear Sir,—Having nearly got through my arrangements in office and which has cost me both time and attention, I am now beginning to consider the state of the fleet in order that it may be made fit for any service. This must be done by keeping their bottoms always so clean as to be in the best sailing condition, and their stores and provisions and water so complete as to enable us to detach upon a short notice, without ever coming into Cawsand Bay or any other port for the purpose of completing. The frigates will go hand in hand with this plan and, when the whole is completed, I think the fleet may be said to be ready for every kind of service. I have already seen the surveyor of the navy and the chairman of the victualling board on this subject, so that each branch may be equally forward with stores and provisions, and leave nothing to seek for when sudden demands are made upon them. When all this has been effected, and ships on every station put in condition for sudden services, I may call the fleet ready for offensive operations, and till that time arrives we can have no credit from any quarter.

Our *Naval Instructions* will, I hope, be issued

¹ So endorsed by Thomson.

² With corrections in Thomson's hand.

soon. It is an improvement of the first importance, but cannot be completed till you have determined on the plan of wages which makes a part of it. It is grievous, when we are so much in want of active ships, to have several now laying ready to receive men, and none to put aboard. From the militia we have only got 1100 men; from the press, only 409 over the whole island; other measures therefore must be thought of and that soon, otherwise we shall be outnumbered by the enemy.

Admiral Collingwood, by his letter of this day, desires an explanation of his orders and is detained, by a calm, at Cawsand Bay. His first orders were 29th April. Whether this delay proceeded from the unprovided state of the fleet, or from what other cause, I don't know; but of this I am sure, if there is not more activity and more attention paid to the state in which the Western Squadron is kept, not even defensive measures can be carried into execution, far less offensive ones. Our naval boards are in such a weak state, that they cannot be relied upon for either advice or execution, but I trust they may be amended. There is no want of willingness, but we are all worn out, and more active officers must be found as opportunity offers to succeed them. If we look at the enemy who are daily augmenting their force—see the secret intelligence about Antwerp in circulation—the prospect is far from pleasant, and the only means to counteract it must be to provide ashore for the defence of the island, and let loose a great part of the many ships that are now employed in watching the opposite coast. Offensive operations must be pursued and our superiority at sea kept up. To do this men must be had at any rate, and that soon. The winter blockade must be given up,

and a squadron of frigates kept to watch Brest, Ferrol and Cadiz—with the fleet kept in port ready to pursue whatever service calls for them.

I thought it right to lay these few ideas before you, that, if possible, the whole machine should be made to move a little brisker, so as to afford us some prospect of success; at present I see nothing cheering. I shall, however, proceed with my own plan and hope gradually to complete it.

Our first revised report will be made in ten days or a fortnight. Would you wish to have a copy of it, or the perusal of it, before it goes to the king?

Mr. W. D. Adams to J. D. Thomson

[*Holograph.*] Downing Street. Thursday, 23rd May, 1805.

Dear Sir.—Mr. Pitt directs me to acquaint you, for Lord Barham's information, that the enclosed statement is quite correct, and that he is anxious to have some favour shewn to Captain Codrington, whenever it can be fairly done.

When you do give him a ship, have the goodness to let me know it in time, that Mr. Pitt may have the credit with his brother of recommending him.

Believe me, dear Sir,

Yours very faithfully,

W. D. ADAMS.

ENCLOSURE¹

8th May.

Mr. Pitt will speak to your lordship in favour of Captain Codrington. The object is an appointment to the Orion.

¹ There is no indication of the name of the writer. The inference is that the letter was originally addressed to Barham, was sent by him to Pitt, for verification, and returned, from him, by Adams.

The captain is brother of the member for Tewkesbury, and has not recently attended, although an uniform supporter ; the cause, I have been privately told, is that he conceives he has been treated with inattention in respect to his brother.

Mr. Codrington is a respectable country gentleman, with a large fortune, and it seems desirable that he should be gratified. I have not the least acquaintance with Mr. Codrington or the captain, though I have understood the latter to be a fair officer in point of service.

Lord Barham to (?)Mr. Pitt

[Autograph ; press copy.]

[No date.]

My dear Sir,—The admiralty as well as myself are alarmed at the want of ships, and unless more can be immediately procured, the trade and colonies will be at the mercy of the enemy's detached squadrons. I know of no method so efficacious as appointing a committee to enquire into all the methods that have been used on other occasions, with the success attending them, and to consider the various proposals that have been offered on this subject.

The naval lords belonging to this board cannot be spared for this purpose, and it requires my constant attendance from 9 to 5 to keep the current business under. There are many intelligent men competent to this business, and which I dare say Sir Evan Nepean, from his long experience in office, can point out. Admiral Berkeley too, from his knowledge of the fencible service, may be of great use.

Formerly, the constables, acting under the

justices and lord-lieutenant, were employed in the country, and many other persons about London, who were paid by the head. A committee would trace all these several means and bring them into action; at present we are in the utmost want of 6 to 7,000 men for immediate service, and no one prospect of having them. If our movements in the American war in procuring men are examined, and those in the last, we shall find no instance of so little being done as at present. It ought to be considered what an enemy we have to encounter and the care with which he brings everything into action. Our skill I think is superior to his; but skill without means can only regret the inactivity that appears to me to prevail everywhere.

I wish it was in my power to add anything flattering on the subject, but if the fleet is not kept in motion and made adequate to our growing demands, we must sink under the preparations that are making against us. The subject is considered here as a very serious one, and the season of the year is already come when we may expect to hear of attacks being attempted on the part of the enemy. If it had been found practical to have made an attempt on Minorca in the absence of the Toulon squadron, it would have given us credit. The ships left in the Mediterranean are sufficient for that purpose if troops can be found. This would be a brilliant act if carried into execution, and counterbalance what may be doing against us by that squadron. If anything can be picked out of these hints I shall be glad. Something must be done and that soon; defensive operations, with such a force as we have collected on shore, must end in bankruptcy; and if that force is not sufficient to defend the islands without keeping two-thirds of the fleet employed in assisting them, the contest

cannot last long. You have my best wishes and shall have my best assistance, but men must be had, and that immediately, to increase the number of line of battleships.

Yours most faithfully and affectly.,

BARHAM.

*To the Heads of the Committees for the East
Indies and for managing the Affairs of the
Foreign Trade*

[Barham's Autograph.]

Sir,—As the enemy is daily increasing their naval strength, it becomes necessary to have the times of sailing of our convoys fixed in such a way as may enable [us] to give them stronger escorts than has been hitherto necessary, and to conceal them as much as possible from the enemy. To accomplish this, their lordships desire you will consult the owners of the trade in your line of the number of convoys which [will be] wanting within the year and specify the exact times when they will be wanted to sail from Spithead or elsewhere; and when you have settled this point, you will inform me of the result in a sealed package for their lordships' consideration. To contract as much as possible the number of convoys.

Rear-Admiral J. C. Berkeley to Lord Barham

[Holograph.]

Admiralty Rooms. 28th May, 1805.

My Lord,—I am just returned from Portsmouth, and am ready to execute any orders their lordships choose to honour me with. It is with the greatest satisfaction that I find the two hog boats (which were given up by the customs to me as an experiment) are finished as gunboats, and that the

expense attending them is so trifling as to surpass my most sanguine expectation, in that part of my plans where I ventured to recommend all the levied vessels should be converted to use for his Majesty's service, as the ratio of expense will be the same.

I remain . . .

*Lord Barham to Mr. Pitt*¹

[Autograph; press copy.]

Admiralty. 30th May, 1805.

My dear Sir,—I have run over Admiral Berkeley's reports on the state of the sea-fencibles and have seen several other papers in the hands of Sir Evan Nepean, &c., &c., on this subject of raising men, and I would submit to you whether a committee had not better be formed to collect all that has been proposed on this subject and make a return of what appears to be the best and most speedy means for raising eight or ten thousand men for the immediate use of the navy. Loose communications will never bring the subject to an issue; and as the men are so greatly wanted, I do hope and trust that we shall be enabled to act with more confidence than we can at present.

As to the vessels condemned as smugglers, I see no objection to acting immediately; and by putting them under the direction of Admiral Berkeley, he may man them from the sea-fencibles and very much increase our force on the coast and be otherwise useful. Until something of this kind is done we shall be harassed to death by these detachments of the enemy and without the power of helping ourselves. Berkeley and Nepean will be proper men for the committee and the several

¹ So endorsed.

plans and papers may be laid before them. The subject is serious and merits immediate attention.

Very faithfully yours,

BARHAM.

Rear-Admiral Berkeley to Lord Barham

[Holograph.]

Portugal Street. 2nd June, 1805.

My Lord,—The enclosed letter, which is a copy of one I received last night, is of so mortifying a nature to me, that I trust your lordship will forgive my appealing to your recollection upon its contents. In the conversation with you, as well as in a subsequent one with Admiral Gambier, I was directed to state officially to the board, my opinions at large upon the subject, which I feared at the time (and expressed myself to you), might be deemed as dictating to their lordships, which fear your lordship's assurances removed. Relying upon this, I did not hesitate in laying before them the manner in which I conceived the object of your wish might be best and soonest obtained. The answer to it will convince your lordship that a wrong construction has been placed upon my zealous endeavours to promote the particular service for which you was anxious. Under this very unpleasant impression, I have answered Mr. Marsden's letter, that I never could mean these vessels to be employed solely for the use of the sea fencibles, but that it certainly might be an inducement for the men to enter, if they knew they were to be under my command during their stay in England, and I shall therefore hope for your lordship's support and testimony in a matter the motives of which have been most completely

misunderstood by the board, whose answer cannot but be considered as conveying very unpleasant sensations to the mind of an officer, who can have no other view but the expediting of the service and the welfare of his country at heart.

I have the honour . . .

ENCLOSURE

Marsden to Rear-Admiral Berkeley

[Copy.]

Admiralty Office. 1st June, 1805.

Sir,—Having laid before my L.C.A. your letter of yesterday's date, enclosing a list of vessels seized by the customs for illicit trade, I have their lordships commands to acquaint you that they have judged it expedient to apply to the treasury for these boats, for the purpose of employing them as advice boats, and not for the use of the sea-fencibles.

Lord Barham to Rear-Admiral Berkeley

[Autograph; press copy.]

Admiralty. 4th June, 1805.

Lord Barham's compliments to Admiral Berkeley. He was not at the board when his letter was answered, but he finds no difficulty in acquainting him, that as soon as the treasury delivers the condemned vessels over to the admiralty, they will be surveyed by officers belonging to the dockyard and appropriated to such services as they are most fit for.

Sir H. Popham¹ on the Blockade

[Copy.]

28th July, 1805.²

I am fully sensible that at the commencement of this war, the primary consideration of his Majesty's government was to adopt such plans as might appear most expedient for facilitating the operation of defence, and even to prevent, in the first instance, the possibility of any predatory expedition sailing from the enemy's ports for the purpose of landing in this country; for our army was then so reduced that we could not hope to offer an effective resistance at more than one or two points, and which was the occasion of that general alarm, which, however, ultimately most happily brought forward all the energy of the country. Not only every city, but even every parish and hamlet is now in a state of military array; and the different corps of volunteers are so perfect in all their evolutions as to become the admiration of the first officers in this country. Under such military preparation, therefore, little is to be apprehended from invasion, but much is to be dreaded by a continuance³ of that system of blockade that has already been proved to be practically imperfect, and likely to be attended with the most serious consequences to this country.

The greatest evil to be apprehended is that of disaffection from a continued state of watching, harassing and almost a total privation of those comforts and relaxations, which, in the most material degree, constitute the happiness and fix

¹ So endorsed by Thomson.

² So endorsed by Barham.

³ It is, perhaps, well to remind the reader that Popham had little or no personal acquaintance with the blockading service.

the content of a British seaman ; but, independent of this, the wear and tear of our ships, the expense of stores, of watering and victualling by transports, of losses in the different transportations, and the total destruction of all our boats, are calamities that increase in so great a ratio as to threaten the annihilation of the fleet in a few years, because we have scarce the means of providing for all these casualties if the ships were even at anchor in our own ports, instead of obstinately braving the elements of the enemy's coasts.

It has been clearly demonstrated that opportunities arise which enable the enemy to elude our most enterprising vigilance¹; and therefore, I do think that to raise the blockade of the principal ports will be a measure of the soundest policy and expediency; and to such a one we ought to resort to put us in a state of efficiency to meet the various resources of France while she is so unembarrassed by continental difficulties as to be enabled to direct all her energies to the destruction of our navy.

The three-deckers wanting the least repair should be immediately ordered to Spithead. The large class of 74s., in the same state, to Cawsand Bay and the smaller class to Falmouth.* These should be the winter naval stations during the war, for I do not mean to object to the assembling the whole fleet in the summer; and indeed only to offer this as a general principle which may probably lead to a digested plan, that will enable us to provide for the wear and tear in such a manner as to insure a constant, efficient fleet. I propose that those ships wanting the least repair should be sent in immediately, because they will soon be rendered effective; and those wanting

¹ Alluding, presumably, to the escape of the Toulon fleet.

thorough repairs may remain off¹ their stations during the fine weather, and return in the autumn to be docked and thoroughly repaired. This proposition is not intended to prevent a small flying squadron cruising during the winter, though that should have orders to bear up on the first setting in of a westerly gale. A chain of communication by frigates and small cruisers should be kept up from the ports of the Bay to the Channel, which may also be extended to Cadiz; and intelligence may be communicated with the greatest facility by my telegraphic signals without the necessity of hoisting out a boat.

MEMORANDUM ON BLOCKADES

[Barham seems to have practically accepted Popham's conclusions, and in this paper repeats them, often in Popham's very words, as far as the * . He then proceeds—]

[Draft. Autograph.]

The blockade during the winter months to be given up, but renewed again the ensuing summer. The whole to be kept in readiness for sea. The ships most in want of refitting to be taken in hand immediately on their coming in and added to the effective ships as they are got ready.

To leave no more line of battle ships at Jamaica and the Leeward Islands than what are sufficient for the defence of these stations till a further force can be sent out.

In the Mediterranean and at Cadiz a force at least equal to the enemy.

For the protection of Ireland, the Channel and

¹ So in MS. The sense appears to require 'on.'

the trade in general, I would advise the two-decked ships who are in the best condition to be distributed into five squadrons of five ships each, and a flag with each ; three of those to be kept constantly at sea and relieved by the other two. Of large frigates, 4 or 5 squadrons of 4 ships or more as they can be spared ; three of these constantly at sea.

At Cork a strong detachment of large frigates, one detachment of which to be always at sea to the westward. The smaller cruisers on this station to protect the coasting trade and St. George's Channel. Those within our Channel will be protected by the cruisers stationed within it.

To complete this plan which is meant for the protection of our convoys and annoying the enemy, I would propose a string of cruisers, having Sir H. Popham's signals, to form a system of communication between Falmouth and Gibraltar. By these means I think we shall be perfectly safe at home ; our ships and seamen will have rest and refreshments ; the trade will be protected, the enemy annoyed, and, by the measures we are taking, our number of ships will increase. And if we can be furnished by 10,000 men, we shall be competent to cover any expedition that may be formed against Minorca, the islands or anywhere else.

[Before the approach of the winter weather rendered it desirable to give effect to this Memorandum, the march of the French army into Germany and the destruction which fell on the French fleet at Trafalgar, did away with the first cause of the blockades, which it was never necessary to renew with the same stringency.]

MEMO FOR PUBLIC NOTICE

[Draft.]

1st August, [1805].

The necessities of the State requiring that the king's ships now remaining in port for want of hands, should be manned without the least delay, it is proposed that intimation be given to the merchants and ship owners in all the principal sea-ports in the kingdom, that one man in six will be taken from all ships and vessels howsoever protected, and whether outward bound or in any other situation. That even apprentices who may have attained a proper size will not be excluded from this measure. The only exception whatever will be in favour of foreigners, who will, nevertheless, be reckoned among the numbers of men on board.

The merchants and ship owners to be informed that they lay their account with this measure, and provide their ships with what may be necessary to make good the deficiency occasioned thereby. At same time, they may be assured that no more will be impressed, except from homeward bound ships, whose men will be taken for the king's service as usual.

Lord Barham to Mr. Pitt

[Rough copy. Autograph.] Admiralty. 3rd August, 1805.

My dear Sir,—I send you the opinions of those gentlemen who composed the meeting on Friday and which ended, as every enquiry must do, unless the seamen are in the country and which I believe not to be the case in any great degree. We must therefore have resort to landmen and the army in being employed afloat, unless the Duke of York will consent to the marines recruiting from the army at a small bounty. If 10,000 men can be got

immediate of these sorts, and as many more by November or December, we shall be able not only to keep the enemy at bay but be ready to cover any expeditions you may choose to undertake.

Circumstanced as we are, we must in the end meet with disgrace upon disgrace. It is impossible it should be otherwise. 15 sail of the line may stand their ground against 20 of the enemy ; but it is impossible that any great advantage can arise from such an inferiority. We may flatter ourselves, from what has passed, that our skill in the management of our ships and the activity and bravery of our seamen will bear us out ; it is a fallacy, which will manifest itself in a few months, if we are not furnished with men for our ships.

The turn of my mind has always been to look forward, and to have nothing to look for when called upon. It is, however, of very little consequence who the builder is, if he is denied tools to work with.

The charge I have taken upon me is, I own, a heavy one, and the service so increased in every point of view as to bear no comparison with former times. I seldom have the pen out of my hand from 8 in the morning till 6 at night ; and although I see no person but on public business, yet I don't find my own finished at that time ; and if I did not make a point of doing so, the current business must overpower us. This labour is very much increased from a want of men, and 'tis mortifying in the highest degree to have no prospect of success, notwithstanding we have removed the grand obstacle in the forwarding ships.

If time would permit, I could say much more upon this very important subject. It is one in which my mind is wholly occupied ; every part of it is familiar to me, otherwise I could not go

through it. I can only add that no one can wish better to your administration than I do; but without the means, I cannot give you that assistance which I am so much inclined to do.

¹ To see a country like ours disgraced, its trade exposed and its coasts open to French for want of 20,000 men . . .

[Chatham Papers, 111.]

[Holograph.]

Admiralty.

12 o'clock, 10th August, 1805.

My dear Sir,—By the letters we have received this day from the ports, everything remains quiet, and must do so till the wind is in a favourable quarter. But finding by the contents of the 'red box' that orders are circulating to prepare the military corps for assembling, I repeated last night to the admirals at the ports to have everything ready that can give strength or efficacy to our naval force in the Channel. Admiral Cornwallis is also apprized of the state of the enemy, that he may not keep too far to the westward at the height of the spring tides.

I don't know under whose direction the river sea-force is placed, but I have wrote to Admiral Stanhope that he may apprize them of the probability of their being called upon to go to the Nore at a short notice, and to have vessels ready to receive them.

This is all that occurs to me by way of preparation; and if any unexpected express should arrive before Monday, I have desired a messenger to follow me.

I am always,

BARHAM.

¹ This last sentence, added in pencil, is partially obliterated.

[*Rough copy,
in Thomson's writing.*]

Teston.

Sunday, 18th August, 1805.

My dear Sir,—If I am right in my conjecture that the Rochefort ships must have joined the combined squadron and are now together at Ferrol, I think this is to be the proper time for the expedition and India ships to sail from Cork. The sea is now open ; and to keep it so, I would send a squadron of 5 or 6 fast sailing two-decked ships to cruise 14 days or more off Ferrol, by which time our convoys will be out of reach of any detachment from that port. Their stay at Madeira ought to be very short and Port Praya avoided, if possible ; and as our number of line of battle ships at home are, for want of men, much inferior to the enemy, I would call back both the Terrible and Reasonable after they had accompanied the convoy a day's sail from Madeira. I say a day's sail, because it will conceal our force intended for India. The sending a squadron off Ferrol will not only be a security to the expedition, but guard our very rich convoy of India ships under care of Admiral Rainier, expected within a fortnight. As it is not probable that any Dutch ships of war have been sent from Batavia to the Cape, I think the *Belliqueux*, *Diadem* and *Diomedé* a sufficient force of two-decked ships for that service ; and in order to secure a superiority, one of Sir Home Popham's small vessels may proceed on to India, to acquaint the admiral there with the particulars of their intentions, and for an additional force of ships, in case the Dutch should move from Batavia or the French have any force in those seas. If the expedition should be given up, which I should be very sorry for, we have only to suffer the India ships to proceed with their proper convoy and

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call back the ships that were intended against the Cape.

If any movement should take place at Ferrol before our convoys are out of danger, they can easily be reinforced from the Western Squadron.

TO THE KING

[Draft.]

25th September, 1805.

Lord Barham, from his time of life and having two boards to superintend, is prevented from having the honour and gratification of waiting on your Majesty as often as his inclination would otherwise lead him. He therefore respectfully takes the liberty of making such communication respecting your Majesty's naval affairs as, he humbly hopes, will incline your Majesty to believe that no attention is wanting on the part of your Majesty's confidential servants to this great and national object. Your Majesty will see from the paper marked A,¹ the present disposition of that part of your Majesty's fleet now in commission, and Lord Barham humbly presumes it will afford considerable gratification to your Majesty to see that, notwithstanding the respectable fleets appropriated to the home stations, it has been practicable to place already so large and effective a force, under that distinguished officer Vice-Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson, in a quarter where it is reasonable to suppose there will be great scope for action. And here Lord Barham presumes to mention that, when the ships now in port, waiting only for men, and which are to proceed to join his lordship under Vice-Admiral Sir

¹ Not included in the draft.

J. T. Duckworth and Rear-Admiral Thornbrough, arrive, it will make his lordship's fleet amount to 40 sail line, 20 frigates, 15 sloops, 10 gun brigs, cutters and other small craft.

As Lord Nelson's command now extends as far to the northward as Cape St. Vincent, and as it is considered of the utmost importance to keep a ready communication between your Majesty's fleets on their different stations, Captain Lobb has been sent in *La Pomone*, with a small squadron of frigates and light vessels, to cruise on the coasts of Spain and Portugal between Cape St. Vincent and Cape Finisterre ; to which it is intended to add some further strength, as soon as circumstances will admit, and to place the whole under Rear-Admiral Sir J. B. Warren, who is particularly well acquainted with every part of that station.

From Cape Clear to Cape Finisterre, Admiral Lord Gardner at Cork has been furnished with all the means, and directed to establish a line of frigates for the sake of a direct communication between those points, which will be extended to your Majesty's fleet under Admiral Cornwallis off Ushant. This, when complete in all its parts, will, it is presumed, afford to your Majesty's fleet many and decided advantages beyond what it could otherwise possess.

Lord Barham will not venture to intrude any further observations, at present, on this part of the subject, nor to call your Majesty's particular attention to the state of the force on any of the other stations, but humbly relies on your Majesty's approbation of the disposition that has been made thereof, until it is seen what turn the affairs of the Continent may take, when it is confidently hoped a portion of that large force now under

Admiral Lord Keith, for the immediate protection of our own coasts, may be directed to other and more brilliant services.

Lord Barham, well aware of the just view which your Majesty is disposed to take of the service in all its branches, very confidently hopes that, in the present very great scarcity of men for the fleet, the late augmentation of your Majesty's Royal Marines, by the establishment of a 4th battalion at Woolwich, has met with that approbation from your Majesty which Lord Barham is most sincerely desirous every act of his naval administration should be fortunate enough to merit; nor can Lord Barham avoid entertaining strong hopes, that the exertions, which have been made within the last eighteen months for the restoration of the fleet itself, have not escaped your Majesty's observation, and that they have been fully approved.

On this part of the subject the papers marked B,¹ and containing accounts of the number of ships that have been lately repaired and are nearly ready for commissioning, together with the actual number now building, as well in your Majesty's own dockyards as in every part of the kingdom, will put your Majesty in possession of any requisite information on this important point. Lord Barham cannot, however, omit taking this opportunity of endeavouring, in the most respectful manner, to bring under your Majesty's observation the difficulties and dangers which attend any degree of relaxation in the essential measure of keeping up your Majesty's fleet, by building, annually and at leisure, with a view to their being sufficiently seasoned, the requisite

¹ Not included in the draft.

number of ships of the line and frigates for that purpose. With the view therefore of giving due time to the ships now constructing in this kingdom to season, your Majesty's confidential servants have had recourse to a measure, which the happy understanding between your Majesty and the Emperor of Russia has enabled them to adopt, and which it is humbly hoped your Majesty will approve in its fullest extent: that of building 10 ships of 74 guns and 10 frigates of 36 guns in Archangel, as an immediate accession of strength to your Majesty's fleet, which will give full time to the ships now in hand here to season, which could not otherwise have been afforded. It is almost unnecessary for Lord Barham to observe to your Majesty that the present war has been very different from any that have preceded it; the object of the enemy having evidently been to wear out your Majesty's fleet by continual blockades, while all his views have been directed to the increase of his own naval power, without, till very lately, affording any opportunity to your Majesty's fleet to add either laurels to its officers or to receive additional strength in point of numbers, as was the case in the late war particularly, when the increased number of your Majesty's fleet was principally composed of ships captured from the enemy.

Having ventured with great deference to obtrude these observations on your Majesty, Lord Barham cannot take leave of the subject, even for the present, without submitting to your Majesty's attention some other circumstances, on which the future welfare and perhaps existence of your Majesty's fleet may really depend, viz. the formation of a well regulated system for the government of the civil affairs thereof: for which

purpose a full investigation, in all its branches, has been committed to the board of naval revision.

The instructions for the government of the officers of your Majesty's fleet, in their military capacity, not having undergone any revisal since the date of their publication in [blank], Lord Barham, when in office before, had made considerable progress in getting them corrected and adapted to the present order of things. He has now again taken them in hand, and he confidently hopes that he will be able to lay them before your Majesty, for your Majesty's approbation soon after your Majesty's return from Weymouth. Lord Barham will not presume to obtrude on your Majesty any account of the manner in which his time is occupied in attending to the different branches of the public service under his own immediate superintendence; but he can, with great truth, assure your Majesty that every moment thereof is devoted to the duty of one or other of the boards at which he presides—the board for revising the civil affairs of your Majesty's navy sitting in one of the rooms of the first lord's house, for greater convenience; and that he would feel himself wholly inadequate to these duties, were he not to decline all engagements, public as well as private, and to avail himself of your Majesty's great indulgence in dispensing with his personal attendance, in matters not absolutely necessary or peculiarly belonging to his department.

Lord Barham to Mr. Pitt

[Chatham Papers, 111.]

[Holograph.]

Admiralty. 23rd October, 1805.

My dear Sir,—The enclosed is from Mr. Gambier, consul at Lisbon. He has passed a good deal of his time in the navy and army, and corresponds with the admiralty board much to our satisfaction. He is a very clever fellow for negotiating and indeed for every kind of business, as you may hear from the minister at Lisbon. Knowing him to be so, I thought it right to send his letter for your information, and which may be returned or not, as you see proper.

We have suffered from the Rochefort squadron on the coast of Portugal, in the capture of some outward-bound ships, of no great value. A squadron of five sail of the line has been in search of them for this month past, and we are scraping together six sail more to send out under orders of Sir John Duckworth for the same purpose, and who is finally to join Lord Nelson with 3 of them. This will reduce Cornwallis for the present, but we cannot help it. Disgraces must follow the want of men, and notwithstanding I wrote Admiral Cornwallis some weeks past of my intention of having two line of battle squadrons at sea, yet, to this moment, I have not been able to accomplish it.

Admiral Cornwallis will have 19 ships after he has made up Sir J. Duckworth's squadron, and a preference is given for fully six more at Portsmouth and Plymouth and manning those who are in greater forwardness.

More than this cannot be done, as it would be

bad policy to go further than we have done in stripping the frigates.

I am . . .

BARHAM.

[Draft.]

Admiralty. 28th November, 1805.

Being now in possession of the long expected returns of the state and condition of the fleet under the command of Lord Collingwood, and of the number of the ships belonging thereto which must come home for repair, Lord Barham is enabled to submit to the cabinet the measures which have occurred to him as necessary with regard to that station, since the force of the enemy has been so much reduced by the late important victories. Lord Barham is at the same time desirous of submitting the general outlines of the appropriation of our naval force, which he hopes will meet with the approbation of his Majesty's confidential servants.

The force which Lord Barham now deems necessary for the extensive service of the Mediterranean station, which extends as far as Cape St. Vincent, is 25 sail of the line and the same number of frigates and small craft as have been lately employed there. The late reinforcements which have been sent out, place already more than the appropriated number of line-of-battle ships under Lord Collingwood, after allowing for every ship in any way materially damaged in the late action being sent home for repair. It is intended that Vice-Admiral Sir J. Duckworth shall blockade Cadiz with as many line-of-battle ships as Lord Collingwood may consider necessary for that service, where it is understood—according to Captain Blackwood's report, who went in twice with flags of truce—that every exertion is making

to bring forward the ships not in the action of the 21st, as well as in refitting the few which escaped therefrom. With the remainder, it is proposed that Lord Collingwood shall go up the Mediterranean, and after leaving a sufficient force to blockade Cartagena, his lordship will still have a disposable force fully equal to such offensive measures, as the existing circumstances of the enemy's operations may render advisable in that quarter.

When the ships now expected home from Lord Collingwood's fleet for repair are arrived, their crews will be turned over to ships of the same class, now ready in port for any service, but which it has not been possible hitherto to get to sea, for want of men. The strength of the Channel fleet will then be such as to admit of one or two flying squadrons being constantly detached from it, without decreasing the force of the blockading squadron below the number which the enemy are known to have at that port. The flying squadrons will have in view the watching of the ports of Rochefort, Ferrol, and Vigo, as well as intercepting any detachments which the enemy may have at sea either coming from, or bound to these ports. This is considered as much more advisable than attempting the blockade of each of these ports, which, in the winter season, is not only (but particularly at Rochefort) a service of great danger, but one of much uncertainty, as was experienced in the course of last winter.

Connected with this system, it is proposed to have always in Falmouth harbour—where new moorings are laid down for the purpose of receiving such part of the Channel fleet as may be in want of provisions, water and stores only; and to which place the telegraph, now ordered to be established

between London and Plymouth, is proposed to be extended—a small squadron of five or six ships of the line, under an active admiral, ready to go on any detached service which the operations of the enemy may render necessary.

Notwithstanding these precautions, it is proposed to have 8 or 9 sail of the line always in the West Indies, viz., 5 at the Leeward Islands and 3 or 4 at Jamaica. The preference given to the Islands is owing to the facility with which assistance can be afforded from thence to Jamaica, whereas no assistance can be depended on, from Jamaica, to windward, under 5 or 6 weeks at soonest.

Our force in the East Indies in point of ships of the line, is fully adequate to any service; but it is intended to add an additional number of frigates, as soon as men can be procured to man those now in readiness at the ports. If the Cape of Good Hope is taken, it will be advisable to remove one of the admirals now in India to that station, with a force adequate to the protection of the place itself, as well as the trade in those seas.

The force in the North Sea will continue to be kept up to its present establishment, until it is seen what effect continental operations may have on the enemy's views with respect to invasion. In point of efficient force, the North Sea fleet is already much amended, and will be greatly so, in the course of a little time; as all the ships of the line fitted for temporary service, on a reduced establishment, are already paid off, and their crews turned over to ships which have undergone a thorough repair, and are equal to any service; and the hired and purchased sloops, which were fitted for this particular service (as a temporary expedient) are in the course of being paid off as

fast as the regular built sloops of war come forward to replace them ; so that, with equal numbers only, the effective strength of this fleet will be greatly superior to what it was, and able to afford solid protection to our trade in that quarter, as well as afford reasonable grounds to hope that, with the assistance of heavier ships drawn from the westward, in case of emergency, we may be able to withstand any attempt from the enemy.

Much might be done by adding a number of additional frigates to each of the stations, both at home and abroad, and which would render our trade and colonies much more secure, if men could be had to man those lately built and repaired, as well as what are now coming forward ; but the necessity of manning the line of battleships has been such, of late, as to leave the frigates as a secondary object only. Indeed the demands for men are beyond all imagination, and the want of them hampers every operation considerably.

There are now about 30 sail of the line, near 40 frigates, and upwards of 30 sloops and brigs (independent of small craft) either building or in the progress of being laid down in his Majesty's own yards and in those of the merchant builders in different parts of the kingdom ; and as near 40 sail of the line have been repaired and brought forward, from a state of ordinary, in the course of the last eighteen months—many of them employed in the fleet which has gained the late important victory—it may be confidently hoped, that there is no attention wanting to provide the means for keeping up that superiority at sea on which so much of our national security depends.

Lord Barham will not trouble the cabinet with any further details on this subject, which indeed might not have been necessary, had he

been in constant habits of attending the Council ; but as the time he finds it necessary to dedicate to the management of this extensive department, is not more than sufficient to carry it on, he feels himself compelled to solicit a continuance of that indulgence which he has already so amply experienced, and that he will not be called on to attend the council except when connected with the business of the fleet, or on professional matters which require it.

BARHAM.

10th January, 1806.

Since the foregoing was written the various alterations in the disposition of the fleet have been such as to render any abstract thereof, as relative to this paper, totally unnecessary ; but complete abstracts, to the present time, will accompany the accounts now making up for Lords Mulgrave and Castlereagh.

MEMORANDUM

FOR THE KING AND CABINET

11th January, 1806.

As the present state of affairs on the continent may probably bring the enemy to an immediate renewal of his design to invade this country, it is necessary to put your Majesty and the Cabinet in possession, not only of the actual state and disposition of the naval force at the present moment, but to point out in an explicit manner, what measures have already been adopted for keeping up and even increasing its present strength, as well as what are now in contemplation for the

future disposal of it, with the view to defeat the enemy's projected invasion, and to annoy and cripple him in every quarter where he is vulnerable.

In order to show what has been already done in respect to the first of these objects, viz. the keeping up and increasing our naval force—the statements A, B, C, D, E, F, and G,¹ were prepared.

'A' contains an account of the particular service on which every ship of the line and 50-gun ship is now employed, to which is added the names of those paid off since May last, either as inefficient from damage received in action, or from having been long abroad and requiring considerable repairs. The number now remaining in commission, viz. 101 ships of the line, and 10 of 50 guns, may therefore all be considered as effective ships, fit for any general service, excepting some of those last commissioned, which are in want of men.

'B' contains an abstract of all the different ships of every class now out of commission, whether laid up in a state of ordinary, or under repair at the different dockyards.

'C'² contains an abstract account of the appropriation of the whole ships and vessels now in commission, and is intended to point out the number employed on each particular service from a first rate to a hired cutter. The grand total will be found under what it was some time ago, but this is owing to the discharge of a great proportion of those hired and less efficient purchased vessels, which were collected at a time when we were in

¹ Only three of these statements are here preserved, two of them are given *post*, pp. 119–20.

² See *post*, p. 119.

want of a sufficient number of regular-built sloops of war, and when the immediate prospect of invasion rendered it necessary to increase our force at all hands ; whereas a great number of regular-built ship-sloops and brigs, as well as strong and efficient gun-brigs, have lately been brought forward and manned from the less efficient class of vessels paid off ; so that although the aggregate number of ships and vessels now in commission is not so great as it was, yet the radical strength of the fleet is much increased, as will be seen by the paper 'D,' which, by giving a comparative statement of the medium number of seamen and marines actually serving in 1804 and 1805, clearly shows that there are now upwards of 12,000 more seamen and marines employed in the fleet than there were last year, while the total number of vessels in commission is under what it was.

'E'¹ contains a list of 39 ships of the line, which have undergone (many of them) very large repairs, and which have been brought forward from a state of ordinary since May 1804 and are all of them now in commission. Eleven of these ships have been in the battles of 22nd July, 21st October, and 4th November, and others are now in distant parts of the world on expeditions of great importance ; 2 of them with Sir Home Popham. To this is added the names of 4 others now in dock undergoing similar repairs ; and when it is considered that, in the period alluded to, only 5 new ships have been launched and added to the fleet, and of these, only three have yet been at sea, the great importance of this measure will be manifest ; as without having fresh ships to replace those worn out by the neces-

¹ This is a nominal list which it seems unnecessary to print. It is enough here to say that it comprises 4 ships of 98 guns, 3 of 80, 20 of 74, and 12 of 64.

sary wear and tear of an unremitting blockade, every movement of our naval force must be crippled in an imminent degree.

This will also serve to show, in a satisfactory manner, the great exertions which have been made by the navy board and the officers of the dock yards within the period alluded to. To the port admirals at the different ports, for their great attention to their respective duties, much credit is due, and it is believed that greater exertions never have been witnessed than what the port-admirals and dock-yard officers have made on this occasion.

'F'¹ contains an account of the number of ships now building or ordered to be built in your Majesty's own yards and in those of the merchant builders in different parts of your kingdom. Besides these it is known to your Majesty that Brigadier-General Bentham is now in Russia employed, with the approbation of his imperial Majesty, in building 10 ships of 74 guns and 10 frigates of 36 guns, which will enable us to give time to the ships building here in the merchant yards, to season, which might not otherwise have been practicable.

The necessity of having had recourse to the merchant builders for keeping up the fleet in times like the present is so obvious, that it appears unnecessary to enter into any comment upon it; a reference to what was found indispensibly necessary towards the end of the American war will be sufficient. At that period, when the fleet was so exhausted by the numbers which it was necessary to keep at sea to oppose the united forces of France, Spain, Holland and America, no less than 42 sail of the line were either actually building

¹ See *post*, p. 120.



or contracted for, when the preliminaries of peace were signed in January 1783.

From the statements already alluded to of the number of ships actually repaired and now repairing, and of those building and ordered to be built, it is hoped your Majesty will see that no attention has been wanting to provide the means for keeping up that superiority at sea, on which our national security so much depends; and without having had recourse to these means, it would have been impracticable to have given that number of ships to Lord Nelson which the important service he was entrusted with necessarily required.

'G' contains a comparative view of the principal articles of naval stores in your Majesty's yards at the different periods therein mentioned; viz. February 1801, the time of our expedition to the Baltic, when our supplies of naval stores were entirely cut off in consequence of the rupture with the northern powers; March 1803—the date of your Majesty's message to parliament previous to the commencement of the present war; May 1804—when the fleet had been twelve months in commission; April 1805—the period of Lord Barham's appointment to the admiralty, and 31st December last, being the latest date of any returns now in office.

From this statement your Majesty will be able to judge of the great stress which has been recently laid in having the dockyards well supplied with every kind of naval stores. The advantages are manifold; it not only enables us to refit the fleet with greater celerity, and to keep it in a constant state of activity, but in a political point of view the advantages are incalculable; as with large supplies of hemp and other important articles of

naval stores, we are less dependent on the course which affairs may at any time take on the continent, from whence our principal supplies are drawn. The importance of these circumstances has long been impressed on Lord Barham's mind ; for at the time of his appointment to be comptroller of the navy, in 1778, when we had been 3 years engaged in hostilities with America, and the war with France had just commenced, he found the value of the stores in the dockyards scarcely exceeded £500,000 ; whereas at the time of his relinquishing his situation in 1790, when we had been seven years without any actual hostilities, and the fleet had undergone a thorough repair, there were stores in the dockyards to the amount of upwards of two millions, while every ship had her own particular stores, &c., appropriated in berths, ready for her equipment on the shortest notice. The rapidity with which the fleet was fitted out in 1792 and 3 is the best confirmation of the solid advantages which attend an abundant supply of stores in the dock yards.

With a view to the second object, viz., the appropriation of the fleet for the defence of the country and the annoyance of the enemy, the first thing is to point out for your Majesty's approbation what now appears to be the best disposition of that part of the force destined to watch the enemy's operations at home, and to defend ourselves from invasion in case of his getting to sea.

The eastern command, now under Lord Keith, extends from Selsea Bill, near Portsmouth, to the Shetland Islands, comprehending a space of between 2 and 300 leagues. There are six flag officers usually employed under his lordship and near 150 pennants, great and small. The

commander in chief's situation is at Ramsgate, 17 miles from where his flag is flying ; and as all orders must be issued from thence, and dispatches forwarded thereto, the impolicy of such a station, and the loss of time which must necessarily arise to the service from it, are too obvious not to strike the most common observer.

It is not meant to enquire into or discuss the reasons which may have induced the admiralty to admit of so extensive and complicated a command being placed under one flag, and that too in the immediate vicinity of the board itself ; it is sufficient that the fact is so at present ; and considering the circumstances of the probable return of the enemy to Boulogne, it appears to require an immediate remedy. The junior flags under his lordship have been :—one at the Downs, one at Dungeness, one at the Nore, one at Yarmouth, one cruising off the Texel, and one at Leith. The correspondence with these passes through the commander-in-chief before it reaches the admiralty ; and the letters from those at Yarmouth and Leith actually pass through London, to Margate, and back again to town, before their contents are known at the board.

It is not in contemplation to propose any alteration of the stations themselves, as they are very proper, but only to make most of the commands separate and distinct ones, and subordinate to the admiralty alone, so that each commanding officer may correspond with the board himself ; the flag at Dungeness, however, being necessarily under that at the Downs.

The distribution of the force now under his lordship, among the different flag officers, will be the subject of a separate paper hereafter, should the measure of dividing it meet your Majesty's

approbation ; but with the view of enabling your Majesty the better to judge of the expediency of this measure, it is proper here to point out what is further in contemplation to render our means of defence so much more secure in this particular quarter.

Independently of the line of battle ships destined to the service of the North Sea and to watch the operations of the Dutch in the Texel, &c., it is intended to have at least 10 or 12 sail of the line under a separate flag, to rendezvous occasionally at St. Helens, and to be considered as a disposable force, applicable to wherever the exigency of the moment may require it most. With this, and the squadron of frigates and light vessels under Sir James Saumarez, who will be directed to cruise, and not to remain stationary at Jersey as hitherto, little apprehension need be entertained that the enemy from Brest will be able to evade our squadrons and pass up Channel for the purpose of relieving and supporting his flotilla at Boulogne, —the possibility of which has at times called off the attention of our Western squadron, and exposed Ireland and our foreign possessions to greater danger.

The great force thus intended for the narrow part of the Channel will therefore enable us to look forward with greater security to the free and full use of our Grand fleet in the Bay, in watching the operations of the enemy from Brest, Rochefort, Ferrol, and other ports in that quarter.

The recent establishment made at Falmouth, as a station for watching the enemy and supplying a portion of the Channel fleet with stores, water and provisions, will it is believed materially contribute, not only to our general security but to the

annoyance of the enemy, by affording a convenient rendezvous for such flying squadrons as those now assembling under Sir John Warren at St. Helens, and Sir Richard Strachan at Cawsand Bay ; and which are of the most essential use in many different points of view. The telegraph now erecting between London and Plymouth, is ordered to be carried on to Falmouth, the importance of which will be very apparent, when the facility it will afford of a ready communication with a port so near the entrance of the Channel, is considered ; thus affording a better opportunity of counteracting the operations of the enemy, than any reliance which can be placed on the blockade of Brest and such ports as Rochefort—the uncertainty of which has been very manifest of late.

With this disposition of our force on the home stations, and the line of communication now established by means of frigates between Cape Clear and Cape Finisterre, and all along the coasts of Spain and Portugal, together with one or more of these flying squadrons always at sea, we shall not only have a fair prospect of defending ourselves, but a reasonable expectation of annoying the enemy in whatever quarter he may be disposed to show himself, whether on his outward voyage or on his return to a port in Europe.

Our force for the Mediterranean station (which comprehends as far as Cape St. Vincent), is intended to be kept up to what it is at present, viz., 25 sail of the line, 20 frigates, and near 30 sail of sloops and small craft. This is 5 sail of the line more than Lord Collingwood has asked for ; but the propriety of keeping it equal to any exigency has been fully verified in a recent instance ; for no

sooner were the reinforcements which were sent to replace the ships damaged in the late victory, arrived on their stations, than it was found necessary to detach Sir John Duckworth, with 6 sail of the line in pursuit of a squadron from a different quarter (the Rochefort), while another division of the enemy's fleet was actually fallen in with and pursued by him, without the effective strength of the Mediterranean fleet being reduced below what is deemed necessary for counteracting the enemy in this quarter, or for carrying on offensive measures higher up, should they be thought eligible.

Our force of line of battle ships in the West Indies has certainly been reduced under what was intended ; but this has been owing to the accidental circumstance of 3 ships of the line being dismasted on their passage from Jamaica to windward, and obliged to bear away for Halifax to be refitted. The force which it has been intended to keep up in that quarter is 5 sail of the line at the Leeward Islands and 3 or 4 at Jamaica. The preference given to the Islands is owing to the facility with which assistance can be afforded from thence to Jamaica, whereas none can be depended on from Jamaica to windward under 5 or 6 weeks at soonest.

Our force in the East Indies, in point of ships of the line, is fully adequate to any service, but it is intended to add a further number of heavy frigates as soon as circumstances will admit ; and if the Cape of Good Hope is taken, it will be advisable to remove one of the admirals now in India to that station, with a force equal to the protection of the place itself, as well as our trade in those seas.

Much might be done by adding a number of

frigates to each of the stations both at home and abroad (and which would render our trade and colonies much more secure) if men could be had to man those lately built and what have been recently repaired and are now coming forward; but the necessity of manning the line of battle ships has been such, of late, as to leave the frigates as a secondary object only; indeed the demands for men have been beyond all imagination, and the want of them hampers every operation considerably.

Having now given a pretty full detail of the means which have been resorted to for bringing the fleet to its present effective strength, and of the measures now pursuing for keeping up and increasing it; and having also stated the general outlines of the plan which is proposed for the future disposition of it, and of the proposed change in the eastern command under Lord Keith, which the present aspect of affairs on the continent appears to render immediately necessary, Lord Barham will not trouble your Majesty nor the Cabinet with any further observations at present. Indeed had he been in constant habits of attending your Majesty's council, this memorandum might not have been necessary; but as the time his lordship finds it necessary to dedicate to the management of this extensive department is not more than sufficient to carry it on, he feels himself compelled to solicit a continuance of that indulgence which he has already so amply experienced, and that he will not be called upon to attend the council, except on matters connected with the business of the fleet or on professional matters which require it.

DISPOSITION OF FORCE

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ABSTRACT¹ OF DISPOSITION OF HIS MAJESTY'S
FLEET IN COMMISSION AS IT STOOD 20TH
SEPTEMBER,² 1805.

Station	Commander-in-Chief	Ships of the Line	Frigates	Sloops and Smaller Vessels	Total
From Shetland to Beachy Head . .	Lord Keith . .	10	15	155	180
Channel . .	Port-Admirals .	—	1	51	52
Guernsey and Jersey . .	Sir J. Saumarez .	—	2	12	14
Off Ushant, &c.	Adml. Cornwallis	26	15	20	63
Irish . . .	Lord Gardner .	—	10	14	24
Mediterranean	Lord Nelson . .	36	19	24	79
The Leeward Islands . .	Adml. Cochrane .	7	15	27	49
Jamaica . .	Adml. Dacres .	3	8	33	44
Halifax . .	Sir A. Mitchell .	—	7	5	12
Newfoundland	Sir E. Gower . .	—	4	4	8
East Indies {	Sir E. Pellew . .	7	10	8	25
	Sir T. Troubridge				
Particular Services .	Sir Home Pop- ham, &c. . .	3	29	68	100
In port, fit- ting and re- fitting, and destined to strengthen the fleets of Adml. Corn- wallis and Lord Nelson	—	11	7	17	36
	Total .	103	142	—	686

¹ This is marked 'A,' but is clearly that described as 'C.'

² Many of the figures have been altered in red ink, some in pencil, apparently as corrections to a later date, or—perhaps as what was intended—thus Nelson's 36 ships of the line is altered to 44, which he never had, and his frigates to 22. The addition, too, is incorrect, being probably copied from an uncorrected list.

F¹

AN ACCOUNT SHOWING THE NUMBER OF SHIPS NOW BUILDING AND PREPARING TO BE BUILT FOR HIS MAJESTY'S NAVY IN THE KING'S YARDS AND IN THOSE OF THE MERCHANT BUILDERS IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE KINGDOM ; TOGETHER WITH THE ADDITIONAL NUMBER WHICH ARE ORDERED TO BE LAID DOWN IN THE KING'S YARDS AS SOON AS SLIPS ARE VACANT AND MATERIALS COLLECTED.

Rate	Ships now building or preparing to be built	Ships ordered to be laid down as soon as (as above)	Total
1	2	3	5
2	4	2	6
3	18	3	21
frigates from 40 to 20 guns	} 31	5	36 frigates
sloops		—	27
g-brigs		—	5

ON THE ABOLITION OF THE BOARD FOR
THE CARE OF SICK AND HURT

Dr. Harness to Lord Barham

Somerset Place. 26th September, 1805.

My Lord,—I am induced to engage your lordship's attention for a moment towards the present establishment of this board,² the business of which being principally professional I consider will

¹ This is marked 'C' in the MS.

² Sc. 'Sick and Hurt.'

clearly point out to your lordship the necessity of three of its members being professional men, that¹ subjects may meet with that comprehensive discussion and speedy determination their importance to the service may demand, and which by long experience I learn cannot be the case where the discussion and decision is left to the consideration of two.

I am,
My lord,
Your lordship's
ever obedient and devoted servant,
JOHN HARNESS.

QUERIES

[Q. In Thomson's writing. A. In a clerk's writing.]

Q. On what authority do the 'Sick and Hurt' act?

A. A warrant from the admiralty by authority of an order in council.

Q. By what authority was the business of prisoners transferred from the 'Sick and Hurt' to the transport board?

A. By an order in council, upon which a patent proceeded, dated 25th September, 1795.

L.C.A. to the Sick and Hurt Board

[Copy.]

1st October, 1795.

His Majesty having been pleased to order that the several duties relative to the care and custody of prisoners of war heretofore executed by you, shall be transferred to the commissioners for

¹ I.e., 'in order that,'

transports, excepting such of the said prisoners as may either from accident or disease become objects of chirurgical or medical assistance, we do therefore hereby require and direct you to deliver over to the said commissioners that branch of business hitherto executed by you, respecting prisoners of war accordingly; excepting such of the said prisoners as may either from accident or disease become objects of chirurgical or medical assistance, the care and charge of whom you are still to consider as part of the duty of your office.

EVAN NEPEAN.

C. MIDDLETON.

P. STEPHENS.

J. GAMBIER.

Memorandum

[Draft by Thomson.]

15th October, 1805.

The deplorable state of the office for sick and wounded seamen and sick prisoners of war seems to render a change indispensably necessary. The unsettled accounts now amount to two millions and a half, of which some are of forty years standing, and upwards of one million and a half of this sum has accrued since the commencement of the late war in 1793. The board, consisting of three members, viz. 2 medical (one of whom is chairman) and 1 civil, act under an admiralty order, and have a secretary, 29 clerks, and an establishment in Somerset House; but the disorder into which the office has fallen is the best proof that can be adduced of its being totally inadequate to the duty with which it is charged. In 1795 this was so apparent, that the care and custody of prisoners of war in health (hitherto part of the business of this board) was obliged to be transferred to the transport office, the business

of the sick and hurt prisoners nevertheless remaining with the sick and hurt office.

As a remedy for the evils resulting to the public from the inefficient state of this office, it is proposed to do away the board and its establishment altogether and to add a medical member to the present transport board (who may either be one of the present medical members of the sick and hurt, or a fit and able physician competent to the situation) as well as to transfer such of the clerks from the sick and hurt office as are equal to the duties of their situation, and may be deemed necessary for the future conduct of this particular department when annexed to the transport office. The present members of the sick and hurt board, their secretary, and such of the clerks as are not competent to be removed, to be allowed to retire on their present salaries.

The transport board will then consist of 6 members, viz.—

- Chairman (always a sea officer),
- 2 naval commissioners (sea officers),
- 2 civil commissioners,
- 1 medical commissioner,

with a secretary, a general accountant, and such sub-accountants as are necessary for each department; 2 inspectors of hospitals in time of war (one only in peace), the same as Dr. Baird is at present.

By this arrangement one very inefficient establishment (with all its separate expenses) will be done away, a considerable saving will necessarily ensue to the public, similar inaccuracies be prevented in future, and a reasonable expectation may be entertained that the present arrears of outstanding imprests (with the investigation of which the general accountant will be particularly

charged) will be brought into order within a given time, while a separate branch is devoted to this very important object.

TO THE KING

[Autograph; press copy.] Admiralty. 4th November, 1805.

Lord Barham humbly begs leave to represent to your Majesty the necessity which appears to exist of consolidating the board of sick and wounded seamen with that of the transport board, and which has met with the entire approbation of your Majesty's chancellor of the exchequer, founded on the investigation which the subject has undergone by the board for the revising the civil affairs of your Majesty's navy.

The deplorable state of the business in the department of the board for sick and wounded seamen has been long known.

In 1796 your Majesty was pleased to give your consent to the business of prisoners of war being transferred from them to the transport board. This measure, though attended with the best effects so far as it went, has only proved a partial remedy. The increase of arrears and unsettled accounts in this inferior department has now accumulated to upwards of two and a half millions, of which one and a half has accrued since the commencement of the late war in 1793. As a remedy for this serious, growing evil, it is humbly proposed to transfer the whole remaining business of the sick and hurt board to the transport board, and to place the senior physician of the former as one of the members of the latter, in lieu of one of the civil members now vacant, and to whom that part of the business strictly medical will be appropriated. By this means your Majesty's

service will be much benefited, the whole of this new extended business will be placed under the management of a board accustomed to the investigating accounts, where not a single instance of arrears occurred since their establishment, and to which it will not be necessary to add any additional commissioner, but only an accountant-general and one additional inspector-general of hospitals and prisons, with adequate salaries, under the control of the board; from which it may be freely presumed that at least equal care and attention will be paid to your Majesty's sick and wounded seamen and sick prisoners, and the whole of the business better conducted than it can be under its present establishment.

On the transfer of the business of the sick and wounded office to the transport office

The neglects and arrears in the office for sick and wounded seamen, have long been made the subject of severe reflections and, it is painful to find, not unjustly. The business is loosely carried on at present under the names of three commissioners, two of whom are medical men, and the other a civil commissioner, but one only a constant resident in London. Their board days are infrequent, rarely more than twice in a week; and consequently the management of the duty is chiefly entrusted to a secretary, who, if so disposed, may make a very improper use of it to his own advantage. The consequence of appointing men, educated for medicine and surgery, without sufficient collateral help from others acquainted with accounts and the general transaction of public business, has been, for such an office, an immense accumulation of arrears. The unliquidated

accounts exceed 350, and the imprests upon them are above two millions and a half, which imprests have been increasing for more than forty years and are now continually increasing. One million and a half of the above sum has been added to these arrears since the year 1792.

Under the present constitution of the office, there is but little hope that this pernicious and disgraceful evil can be stopped, much less can it be expected that the arrears should be brought up, or that accounts, which affect both the peace of individuals and the honour and interest of government, should be closed. The habits of medical men are not formed for these purposes; and, coming late in life into a public office, they cannot be supposed to know the methods of accounts, or the general routine of public, and sometimes complicated duties. They are, therefore, constantly liable to impositions from persons, as well in their own office as out of it, and may be duped to believe that business may be carried on very well without too much of their care and intervention. In the meantime, the public suffers, and individuals who are upright remain dissatisfied. In no office of accounts can there be properly any remission of attendance upon duty or any postponement of adjusting balances, when the several documents are brought in. And where they are not presented, unless a very satisfactory cause be given, there is reason to believe that some malversation has taken place, which, instead of deferring, only the more forcibly demands a scrutiny, without the loss of a moment.

But how can this be done, when there is no board at the time when the correspondence arrives, or (what is not an impossible case) when the correspondence, for certain considerations, may

not wholly be laid before it? A secretary with a number of clerks, being very little responsible, cannot, for public satisfaction, be greatly depended upon. From the foregoing considerations it is apparent that some remedy should be provided; and if the remedy can be at the same time economical as well as efficacious, it will deserve the more attention.

In the beginning of the year 1796, it was thought proper, as a partial relief, to transfer the business of the care and custody of prisoners of war in health from the board for sick and wounded to the transport board. The effect was a clear and constant transaction of the duty, without leaving any arrears of accounts, excepting one or two under legal investigation, in a few months after the last cessation of hostilities. The business of sick prisoners left in charge was known to constitute two-thirds, if not more, of the whole duty of the sick and wounded office during the last war, but might have been executed by the transport board, with little more trouble and with great public advantage, in addition to what was delivered over to their care. If the whole business of the sick and wounded office were incorporated with the duties of the transport office, there is reason to believe, from the constant and daily attendance of the members, and from some other modifications, that the whole would be carried on with precision, with less charge upon the whole and without arrears and delays. The number of members at the board might remain five as at present, but under the following form:

- The chairman—always a sea officer;
- A civil commissioner;
- Two sea-officers;
- A physician.

These might superintend the business, either in two committees, or, by going through the business, department after department, as at present, according as they might find it more convenient for accuracy and dispatch. The chief attention of the naval men would be to the shipping and stores, and of the civil commissioners to the accounts and correspondence as at present.

The physician would naturally be consulted upon all points relative to medicine, hospitals, &c. In time of war, there should be two medical men, with subordinate salaries, as visitors of hospitals, prisons and prison ships, who should correspond from time to time with the board, and receive their instructions from it. In cases of great moment or consequence, the transport board should be instructed to transmit copies of their ¹ reports and observations to the admiralty; but these persons ² should always be considered as connected with and dependent upon the board itself, and not permitted to act either by or for themselves, without its concurrence.

A secretary, of course, must be needful; but it is not necessary, for many reasons, to transfer the present secretary of the sick and wounded board with its business to the transport board. One good secretary should suffice for the whole department; and, from the constant sittings of the board, could not get into the habit of acting without it.

In the next place, to prevent the alarming evil of arrearages, a general accountant should be appointed, whose duty, over and above one particular branch, might extend over the account of the whole office in its several divisions, not

¹ Sc. 'of the physicians.'

² The physicians.

much dissimilar to the arrangement subsisting in the excise. The chief accountant of each division may remain, but every accountant and book of accounts should be subject to the inspection of the general accountant, and, if need be, representation to the board. A small addition to his present salary might be thought a reasonable compensation and render him the more respectable.

Not an abler or a better man for this purpose can easily be found than the present accountant for the transport department. There is no doubt, but that, with his help, and by a selection out of the present clerks belonging to the sick and wounded office, specially assigned to the purpose, the dormant accounts might be cleared, beginning with the latest arrears and working backwards to the oldest as far as possible. The persons selected for this service, should be kept closely to it, without deviation or delay, and subject to the full control of the general accountant under the authority and determinations of the board. The accountants, upon this plan, would stand in the following order.

These are at present under the transport board.

1. General accountant and for transports.
2. Accountant for prisoners of war in health at home.
3. Accountant for prisoners of war in health abroad.

These are now under the sick and wounded board.

4. Accountant for sick and wounded seamen at home.
5. Accountant for sick and wounded seamen abroad.
6. Accountant for sick prisoners of war.

The clerks being transferred with the business, the expense on that head would be the same. There would be a saving in messengers, and in some subordinate, incidental charges. The transport office being in a situation of much local

convenience, from its proximity to the great offices of state, might remain where it is, receiving the accommodation of an additional house, which might be rented upon easy terms ; and the confined state of some offices in Somerset Place would render the addition of the present sick and wounded office a useful convenience to their business.

Commissioners of Transports

[Draft in Thomson's writing.]

His Majesty having been pleased to approve of the business now conducted by the sick and hurt board being transferred to your board, we acquaint you herewith, and direct you to let us know when you can be ready to receive the books and papers connected with the department for sick and wounded seamen and sick prisoners of war, agreeably to the mode pointed out in your letter of the , when proper instructions for your guidance in this business will be sent you.

Sick and Hurt Board

His Majesty having been pleased to approve of a proposal for consolidating the business now concluded by you into that of the transport board, I am commanded by my lords commissioners of the admiralty to acquaint you therewith, and that measures will be taken as speedily as possible for carrying the same into effect.

I am at the same time to acquaint you that such of your present clerks as may be deemed fit and efficient, are to be transferred, together with all the books and papers, as soon as the commissioners of transports are ready to receive them.

Commissioners of Revision

His Majesty having been pleased to approve of a proposition for consolidating the business of sick and wounded seamen and sick prisoners of war into that already under the management of the transport board, and of doing away the sick and hurt board and its establishment entirely, I am commanded by my L.C.A. to acquaint you therewith and to express their lordships' desire to have proper instructions drawn up for the guidance of the transport board in conducting the new branch of business, on the basis of substituting one of the present medical members of the sick and hurt board in the place of one of the civil commissioners of the transport board, whose situation is now vacant.

Dr. Harness to Lord Barham

Harrow. 2nd November, 1805.

My Lord,—The commissioners for sick and wounded seamen being informed by Mr. Marsden's letter of the 19th ultimo that the lords commissioners of the admiralty have it in contemplation to new-model the establishment of their board, in order that the public business may be more effectually carried on, and the arrears of accounts so long accumulating be brought up; and a report having reached me, that it is their lordships intentions, in this arrangement, to consolidate the board of transports with that of the sick and wounded, I cannot but consider it a duty which I owe to your lordship, to point out some of the important advantages which the service has derived since the establishment of a naval medical

board, as well in the prevention as in the remedying the diseases incident to seamen, by its being duly enforced on the minds of professional men the necessity of a strict attention to cleanliness, ventilation, clothing, &c.; the absolute necessity of keeping the ship clean by other means than frequent wetting, a process so much had recourse to at the period of my embarking in the navy, in 1776, that our ships were ever burdened with numerous sick labouring under all the various diseases produced by cold and moisture, and which, I am persuaded, terminated in innumerable cases of dreadful scurvy, of which disorder many hundreds at that and subsequent periods were annually lost to the navy. Among the many advantages derived to the service by a constant and regular endeavour to prevent and mitigate the diseases common to a sea life, the discovery¹ of the effect of the use of lemon juice does not rank last in the list. I hope your lordship will allow me to relate the circumstance which led to the use of this specific against the sea-scurvy, without exciting any impression on your lordship's mind of my entertaining the most distant idea of assuming merit not due to myself.

During the blockade of Toulon in the summer of 1793, many of the ships' companies were afflicted with symptoms of scurvy; and as the object, which Lord Hood, then commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean, had in view, would not allow the ships, whose companies were so affected, to be detached into port to obtain the necessary refreshments,

¹ Harness clearly considered this, or at any rate the first use of it, as his. He was as ignorant as everybody else that 200 years before, Lancaster had taken a ship out to the Cape of Good Hope with little loss, by a free use of the same specific. See *Voyages of Sir James Lancaster* (Hakluyt Society), p. 62.

I was induced to propose to his lordship the sending a vessel into port for the express purpose of obtaining lemons for the use of the fleet, with which his lordship most cheerfully complied; and the good effects of its use were so evident to every commander employed on the station, that an order was soon obtained from the commander-in-chief, that no ship under his lordship's command should leave port without being previously furnished with an ample supply of lemons; and to this circumstance becoming generally known, may the use of lemon juice, the effectual means of subduing scurvy be traced. Nor must the many important advantages resulting from the use of lemon juice rest here, as it is evident its administration as a preventive, with its prescribed concomitants, cleanliness, ventilation, &c., which are constantly impressed on the minds of the surgeons by the medical members of the sick and wounded board, have been the means of preserving the health of our fleet to an unparalleled degree, as may be evinced by comparing the number of sick sent to our hospitals and sick quarters, and the proportion of deaths formerly and in the late and present war.

Respecting the arrears of accounts in this office, which have been accumulating for more than sixty years, I beg to assure your lordship that soon after my being appointed to the chair of the board, I took much pains to acquaint myself as well with the extent, as what appeared to me even of greater moment, the cause of such arrears; and being satisfied that they had principally been occasioned by an insufficiency in the establishment, I introduced a discussion at the board many times, but could never get a majority for increasing this establishment in consequence of

Dr. Weir having delivered a verbal message from Lord St. Vincent, that his lordship disapproved of it.

This circumstance, I judged proper to mention to the commissioners of naval enquiry when questioned by them on this subject, with what other measures I had endeavoured to carry into effect to remedy this growing evil, which were all obstructed by the adherents of Lord St. Vincent at the sick and wounded board, who frequently said they were directed by his lordship to prevent any increase of the establishment. This was stated upon oath, and it was confirmed by Dr. Weir, much to the astonishment of the commissioners of enquiry; which circumstance further exasperated Lord St. Vincent against me, and it brought down upon Dr. Weir great displeasure at the time, on the part of his lordship, whom, Dr. Weir has said, urged him to go and unsay to the commissioners of enquiry what he had deposed on the subject. On the 12th of November 1804, however—previous to which period Dr. Baird had been removed from the board—I obtained a majority, and the situation of the office was, in consequence, very fully represented to the right honourable the lords commissioners of the admiralty, and the outlines of such an arrangement submitted to their lordships' consideration, as would, I was convinced, have been attended with the most beneficial consequences of the service.

I have taken the liberty of mentioning these circumstances to your lordship, to show that I have not been wanting in endeavour to procure a remedy for the evil complained of; and if I have failed to urge your lordship on the necessity of a general augmentation of this establishment as

such a remedy, such failure has arisen from understanding, or at least trusting that the commissioners for revision would make such enquiry into these circumstances as would render any intrusion on your lordship's time, on my part, on the subject unnecessary. I have too much reason to believe, that much industry has been used to impress your lordship with an unfavourable opinion of this office; and knowing full well how much attention is paid to the representations of Dr. Baird, and also to the statements of others who are friends of Lord St. Vincent and his ruinous system of economy, and who, from the part which I have taken in respect of his lordship, are my personal enemies, I am not surprised that they should have had some effect on your lordship, who have yet heard nothing on the other side of the question. I rely however on your lordship's goodness to do me justice, and not to suffer any imputations to be made against my character, which, I have, thank God, preserved unsullied through a course of twenty-nine years' service, in any public document issued under your lordship's auspices, in which it may be deemed necessary to assign a reason for proposing the annihilation of the independency of the office, which, it has been my misfortune to preside at. I call it a misfortune, my lord, because censure and obloquy have been levelled at it, for its not having performed what, from its great deficiency in establishment, it has not been possible for it to perform.

At all events, my lord, no part of the arrears can be imputable to me. I have been little more than three years the chairman of the board, during the greatest part of which period the office has been harassed by the preparation of papers, statements, and accounts for the commissioners of

enquiry and the late admiralty board, which has left very little time to the clerks for executing the current business ; and I trust, my lord, that, if I am not to be the medical member of the consolidated board, due consideration will be had to my long and zealous services, and to my former situation of physician to the fleet in the Mediterranean, from which I was removed by the tyranny and duplicity of Lord St. Vincent ; as also to my claim for half-pay during the period I have been a member of the sick and wounded board, as has been granted to others on grounds not more strong than what I claim upon.

I cannot take leave without submitting to your lordship's consideration, whether it is not more creditable to the whole of this department, that the arrears so much complained of, do still exist, than that, with an establishment in every way inadequate, the accumulation thereof had been prevented at an expense of over-payment, to perhaps a very considerable amount, by too hasty passing of the accounts, without the due and necessary full and close investigation of the propriety and validity of all the different items thereof ; and which, had the instruments of this office not had too much regard for the public service and their own characters, might have been done to their own emolument without detection.

I beg pardon for having thus far trespassed on your lordship's time, and have the honour to subscribe myself,

My lord, your lordship's most obedient
and devoted servant,

JOHN HARNESS.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH ADMIRAL
LORD KEITH AND OTHERS

Concerning the Operations in the North Sea

INTRODUCTORY

On 24th October 1803, Sir W. Sidney Smith who was then, with a broad pennant in the *Antelope*, 50, under Lord Keith's command, was detached with a small squadron to watch Flushing and the Scheldt, where the enemy was reported to have made and to be still making extensive preparations for, as there was reason to believe, the invasion of this country. In the end of December he transmitted to Keith a paper of Intelligence which he had received from one of his agents, dated 'Flushing, 27th December 1803.' This, which is printed *in extenso* in Barrow's 'Life of Sir Sidney Smith' (vol. ii. p. 128), reported that:—

'The French are leaving this place and are going to Ostende, Dunkirk and Calais, expecting to embark from these places. It is reported there are one hundred thousand men between Ostende and Boulogne. The gun-boats and schuyts which have been brought for the expedition amount to one thousand; and eleven brigs which have been pressed have each one mortar on board and are to serve as fire vessels; these are at Dunkirk, . . . The expedition is very forward; some of the officers are arrived who are to take command. Several of the vessels have already some troops on board, but no sailors. They make the gun-boats serve as barracks. . . . There are fifteen thousand Dutch troops drafted for the expedition; two regiments have left this place to-day for the Texel. The gun-boats which are built at Amsterdam

amount to one hundred and twenty, which are now lying at the Texel. The Dutch troops which are going on the expedition are to embark from Flushing and the Texel. . . . In the town of Flushing are eighteen hundred soldiers, and in the island about eight thousand, the most part Dutch.'

A later report, dated 'Flushing, 7th January,' says:—

'There are two frigates here—La Furie (French), and Aurora (Dutch) which was built here, but her upper works are not yet finished. The people belonging to the frigates are drafted on board the gun vessels, and fifteen hundred French soldiers were embarked this day on board the gun-boats. They are drawing all the French troops out of Holland to this place, from whence they are to sail to join the gun vessels at Boulogne and Calais. The gun vessels which are at the Texel are to come here, and one part of the expedition is to sail from hence. There are to be three hundred gun-boats collected here, and the Dutch troops are to embark from this place.'

It was intelligence of this kind, made up partly of things seen, largely of things heard in the *cafés*, on which Keith had mainly to depend. It was difficult to separate the true from the false, and he had to be prepared for all possibilities. The letters and orders of 1803 and 1804 do not fall within the Barham period, and among the Barham papers there is nothing relating to these years except the two letters immediately following; but the Flushing danger remained, and it will be seen that the presence there of the two frigates was a cause of grave anxiety.

Lord Keith to Vice-Admiral Bligh

[*Extract. Copy; signed.*]

Monarch, off Ramsgate.
24th December, 1803.

It is pretended that Ireland is the object of this expedition; and it will be important not only

on this, but indeed on all occasions, that all the vessels sailing from Leith should be particularly careful, in the event of falling in with any of the enemy's fleets, to note most particularly the course they are steering, with all the circumstances of wind and weather at the time; and that they should convey such intelligence to the nearest port and forward it by the most expeditious means.

Lord Keith [to Rear-Admiral Russell]

[Copy; signed.]

Monarch, off Ramsgate.
27th December, 1803.

As it is possible that an enemy's embarkation may sail from some of the Dutch or French ports in the North Sea unperceived, and attempt to land in Scotland or pass round that country and make for some of the northern ports of Ireland, it becomes our duty, however slight their prospect of success may be, to guard against the attempt, and as much as possible to quiet the apprehension that may exist in the minds of his Majesty's subjects on that occasion. I therefore desire, if you shall obtain information of any armament having escaped out of port and proceeded in that direction, that you will send expresses by the shortest and most expeditious routes to Vice-Admiral Bligh at Leith, to Lord Moira at Edinburgh, to Loch Ryan in Galloway where a force of his Majesty's ships is stationed, and to the collector of the customs at Port Patrick, to be forwarded from thence with all possible dispatch to Ireland, that his Majesty's forces by land and sea, in all these quarters, may, in such an event, be held in readiness to receive an invading foe.

Lord Keith to Lord Barham

[Copy.]

16th July, 1805.

My dear Lord,—A Russia merchant of great consideration has sent me information he has just received.

St. Petersburg.

There are near 50 American vessels arrived here and the agents of that country are buying up all the hemp and sail-cloth, insomuch that it has risen £7 per ton and is at 52; cloth not to be had. Cargoes for thirty ships, under Swedish colours, are gone to Lubeck to be cleared for Lisbon; but in fact all are French or Spanish property.

He thinks by government employing a person to go to either place, or even by writing to the ministers or consuls, it would not be difficult to trace the real owners and destination of the cargoes; the true papers are sent by land. He adds the Americans sometimes make pretended purchases in the name of a super-cargo, for ten per cent. on the cargo.

I have sent this that government may take such steps as appear most judicious in a delicate case, and am most sincerely,

Your lordship's . . .

KEITH.

7th August, 1805.

My dear Lord,¹—I am honoured by your letter of yesterday's date. It is long ago that orders were given to Admirals Russell and Bligh that,

¹ Unless otherwise noted, these letters from Keith to Barham are all holograph.

in the event of any force escaping from the Texel, or any force appearing in the North Sea, expresses were to be sent to the government here, to Ireland by Donaghadee,¹ and to all the military commanders by the most expeditious means; but I shall, by this post, remind the admirals of that part of their duty. The St. Albans was detained by a gale of wind in which the anchor could not be taken up, but passed this yesterday morning soon after day. I shall send a 64-gun ship to the Texel squadron immediately, and I have ordered the Thalia out of the Humber. If the Regulus comes round half manned, we must borrow some to fill her up. The enemy cannot come out of Boulogne in less than six tides, I think; but it is certainly important to be in power on this coast for six weeks to come; by being otherwise it is an invitation for them to come and try. If the Edgar gets to Long Reach to-day, we shall have her here in a few days.

I have the honour to be, with the highest respect,

Your lordship's

Most obedient humble servant,

KEITH.

If the Dictator is intended for this service, their lordships may order her to proceed to Yarmouth from the Nore, which will save time and make Admiral Russell strong.

Can your lordship oblige me with a commission in the Royal Marines for Mr. John Love,² aged twenty, 5 feet 8 inches, well educated, is in a volunteer corps and has been in India.

¹ Keith wrote Dona-hu-Dee: presumably a hired cutter.

² Second lieutenant, 10th September.

CAPTAIN G. R. COLLIER TO BARHAM

[Holograph.]

Liverpool. 10th August, 1805.

My Lord,—A short time since, when I was in town by their lordships' order to attend a committee of the House of Commons in the case of Sir Home Popham, I took occasion to entreat the honour of an interview with your lordship, that I might offer to your consideration some ideas which gave, in my mind, very fair reasons to believe a successful attack might, by a small class of fire vessels, be made on the enemy's shipping in the Texel outer Road; and I could, I am willing to persuade myself, by a survey I made of those channels¹ at the desire of Lord Spencer, have afforded your lordship some information upon this subject which perhaps might have been thought deserving your consideration. I waited in town several days in the hope I might have been honoured with an interview; but not having had that happiness, I did not feel myself justified in remaining longer absent from my duty as captain of the sea-fencibles here. But, as the intelligence from the continent speaks very confidently of the long-meditated attempt being made, the feelings of a British subject and, moreover, of a British officer, impel me to trespass a letter, perhaps of inconvenient length, upon your lordship. Though it may be concluded I must naturally have a desire for more interesting and active duty, yet your lordship will be pleased to excuse me when I

¹ By the special permission and assistance of the Hydrographer, Rear-Admiral Purey Cust, the part of Captain Collier's chart which shows these channels is here reproduced. They have altered in such an amazing way that the modern chart is useless as an illustration of Collier's project.

THE TEXEL

1799

SOUNDINGS IN FATHOMS

Scale of Miles

HA KES

MARS
DEEP

MIDDLE
PLAT

SCULPT
GAT

HELDER

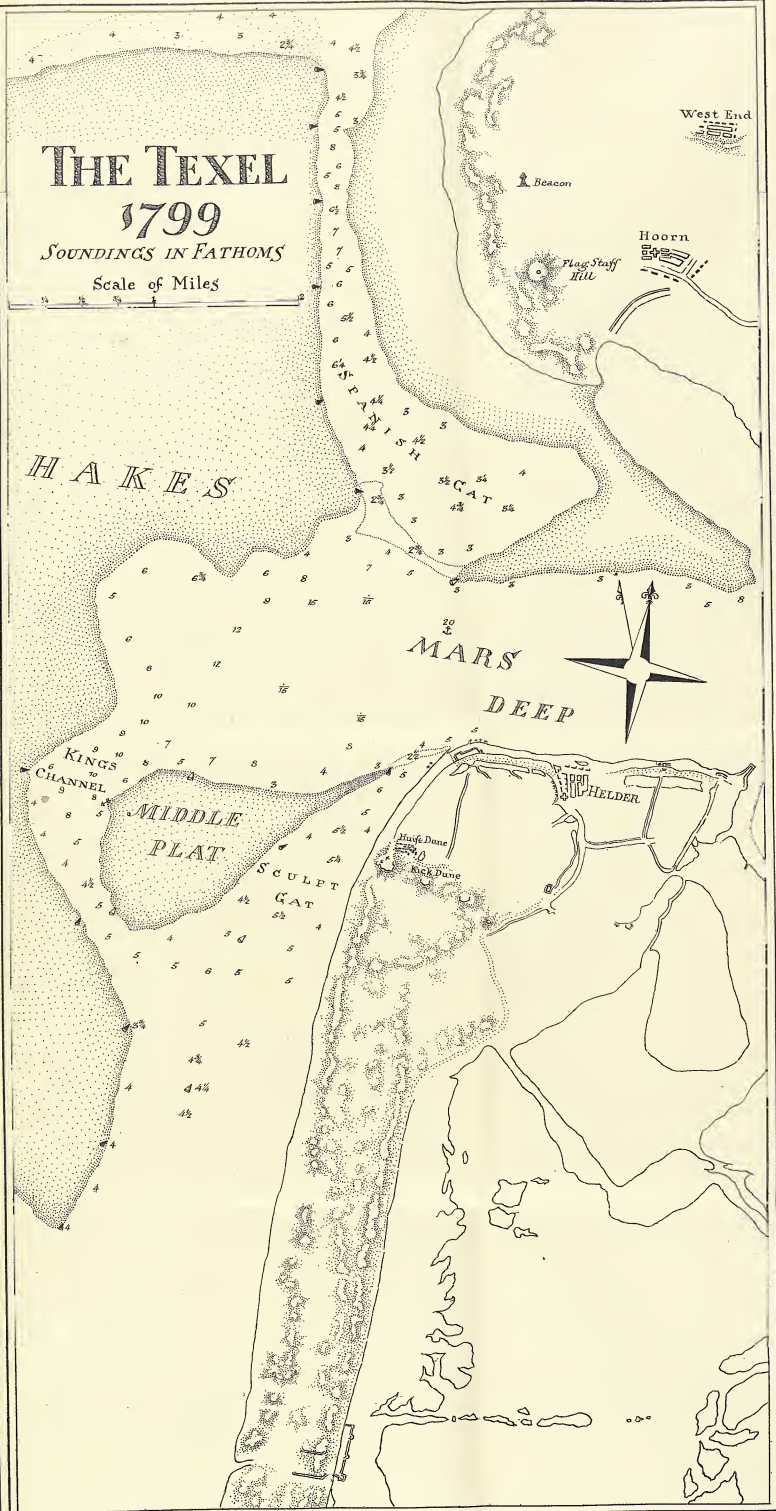
Hulst Dane
Kick Dane

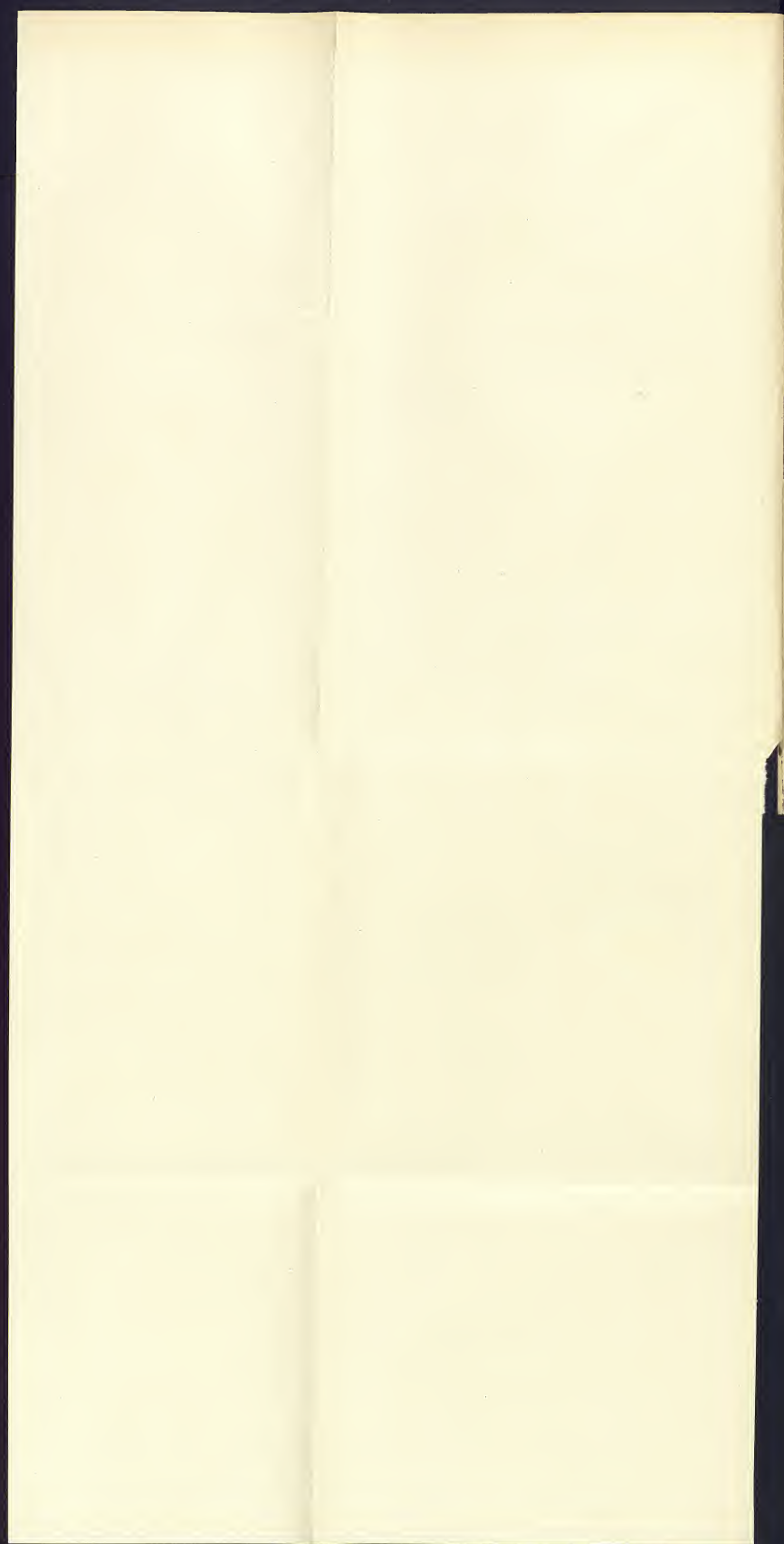
West End

Beacon

Flag-Staff
Hill

Hoorn





explain that I make no request, having long had my post-rank, every step towards which I had the happiness to obtain by some public service ; yet I feel that zeal, that any object of honourable distinction, of hazard or enterprise, I should rejoice in embracing.

I have understood, my lord, that it has been asserted the usual channel into the Texel for large ships has been rendered unnavigable to them. It is difficult for me to say what changes there may have been in a few months ; but as the Dutch sent ships of size and force from the Texel, just at the commencement of the war, and as I am fully satisfied they could never pass the Sculpt¹ Gat (the channel nearest the Helder), I confess my lord that I have considerable difficulty in bringing my mind to adopt this opinion ; and as I do most positively assert that line of battle ships cannot navigate the Sculpt Gat, the enemy must show a degree of ignorance impossible to account for, if they are assembling their men of war and transports in a situation of considerable hazard in bad weather, and it really be impossible to carry them at last to sea. And I am further at a loss to reason on such conduct, because, every hour of the day, they may ascertain the difficulties of the navigation, even by sending an intelligent officer, in a fishing boat, to sound.

Two objects present themselves to your lordship ; the one, if the navigation be so open as to give the enemy the chance even (for I will put it to that) of getting to sea, of destroying their shipping by fire vessels at a suitable moment, which, in the situation I understand them now to be, I aver is practicable if the fire vessels are commanded by persons who have nerve and mind to

¹ Now Schulpen Gat.

place them properly, and sufficient local knowledge ; the other is, if the idea of the navigation being so affected, as is stated, be fully founded, by destroying the port of the Texel as a naval arsenal for ever ; and this by the simple means of sinking, in proper situations, a few old ships of sufficient burden.

Had the stone expedition¹ intended against Boulogne, been directed to the Texel and placed under the superintendence of proper persons, it would have produced the most solid advantages to this kingdom, not only at the present moment, but for a very lasting period ; but the object against Boulogne was suggested by a man of the name of Etches, whom I have a recollection of from his having been on board the Isis expedition to Holland, and whose ignorance, where he professed much knowledge, I had myself an opportunity of detecting ; but persons proposing to destroy the navigation of Boulogne by the means intended, could never have reflected upon the rise and fall of the tide there.

Any man, my lord, considering the political state of Europe, will lay aside all calculation of what is probable, because events bid defiance to reasoning ; it, therefore, in my humble judgment, becomes a consideration, at present, only how the enemy can be injured most permanently ; and I cannot help believing that to render unnavigable for ships of size and force, probably for ever, but certainly for a considerable length of time, the principal port of Holland, is doing a most essential service to this kingdom, and most materially distressing the enemy.

The present advantages would be evidently the reduction of the North Sea fleet, and, of course,

¹ October, 1804. See Brenton's *Naval History*, iii. 258.

an addition to the western force ; and the future benefit would be, that of reducing the naval resources of France. I say of France, as I believe it may be difficult in future to mark a distinction—I mean as long as the same rancorous and ambitious spirit exists with the persons who now direct that government.

I suggested this idea, nearly at the close of last war, and sent the particulars of the arrangement to my friend and patron, Prince William of Gloucester, from the Cape of Good Hope, and from Captain Alexander Mackenzie, the officer I named as well qualified from his local knowledge. I understood, almost at the moment of peace he was called upon, and was intended to carry my plan into effect.

I have not the honour of being known in any way to your lordship, but if it should be desirable to have ascertained that I am not a person likely to suggest anything without due consideration, I am sure his Royal Highness Prince William of Gloucester would satisfy your lordship ; and I believe Mr. Thomson is too well acquainted with myself not to be able to assure your lordship that I am unlikely wantonly to adopt or weakly to abandon any measure,

I assure myself your lordship will give me your excuse for introducing this subject to you ; and you will allow me leave to add, if the one or the other of my suggestions shall be thought deserving your consideration, I shall have great pleasure in submitting to you detailed statements of either or both of these plans. But these, I of course forbear troubling you with, until I shall know whether they would be acceptable to you or not. I have the honour . . .

Minute by Barham.—To send particulars.

III.

L

[Liverpool. 20th August, 1805.

My Lord,—In obedience to the desire of your lordship, I take leave to submit to you the means I should recommend to render the Texel unnavigable to ships of force, and to attack, by fire vessels, the fleet said to be assembled there.

The destruction of the navigation for large ships I shall first speak of, as the most important object; and when doing so, your lordship will be pleased to understand I am to consider the enemy's fleet not to be in the outer road.

By a survey I made of the Texel channels I must beg leave positively to assert the Kings' Channel is the only one navigable by line of battle ships, or indeed, ships of two decks; large frigates may venture through the Sculpt Gat, but with considerable risk; the tide must be favourable, and the wind always a leading one. The narrowest parts of the King's Channel will scarcely admit of any ship turning in or out; ¹ the depth of the water in these parts, from 4, 4½ to 5 fms. This part of the channel is barely within gunshot of the batteries. I satisfied myself of this in the year 1799, when the Helder was in our possession, by anchoring in a boat near the Middle Ground in the King's Channel and continuing for some time whilst fired at experimentally from the batteries; some shot fell near me and others short.

My object is to render this part of the channel, if not totally unnavigable, at least so difficult as, with the most favourable circumstances, ships of the line cannot attempt it. For this purpose, I should recommend the purchase of ten, twelve, or fourteen (the latter number I should prefer) of the largest class of old West India ships, Dutch Greenland or Archangel ships, by a trusty or

I.e. beating against an adverse wind.

confidential person, not in the immediate employ of government, because I would not make the matter of more notoriety than was really necessary. The holds of eight of these should be filled with coarse rubbish, such as the refuse of lime-stones, with which the north country ships are usually ballasted—I think at Erith—when they return light; the cost of which must be a very trifle, as it is the cheapest ballast that can be had. There is, I believe, a sort of cement that hardens immediately, and is not reduced by water; if a quantity of this could be procured, and loosely thrown into the vessels' hold also, it might be desirable. The remaining ships intended to be sunk, I would have more compactly stowed, and a few layers of Portland stone rivetted together as masonry should form the bed.

The vessels, thus prepared, and each under charge of a discreet, attentive, commissioned officer, should cruise off (or anchor near) the southern buoy or end of the Haaks Sand, waiting the favourable moment of a south or south easterly wind to enter the channel. An entering port should be cut both head and stern; a small scuttle also, on each side, even with the water mark. Two anchors, with only two or three fathom of cable, should be stowed, head and stern, ready to be cut away when the ship might be considered in a proper berth, for the purpose of more effectually securing her the moment she touched the ground, as well as to defeat any attempt to sweep her with hawsers. The rigging should be well tarred, ready to be fired when prepared for sinking, or the topmast rigging cut away; and the more loose or weak the upper decks of these vessels might be, the better; indeed planks of the upper decks might, if time should allow, be ripped off. It should be an

endeavour to sink the vessels as nearly in a diagonal line with the stream of the tide as possible, by means of a spring upon the cable. If the Dutch men of war are not at anchor in the outer road, I have no doubt of the practicability of this measure, and of the successful consequences of it ; for the current carries with it, each tide, such a body of sand, that any artificial obstruction would in a few days create a difficulty not to be removed, and that difficulty will be increasing with every tide.

I now beg leave to submit my ideas of the plan of attack on the Dutch shipping by fire vessels. This can be attempted only in the event of their being in the outer road ; if they be at anchor there, the more numerous their fleet, the better founded are the prospects of success. To effect this object I should recommend two description of fire vessels ; the one, the common fire brig ; the other, a much smaller class, such as Dutch schuits or fishing boats. These latter class should enter by the Spanish Gat (if circumstances required it). Two of the smaller class should be destined to attack one vessel, the one fishing boat or schuit being in tow by the other ; the intention being to lay them athwart hawse of the enemy and by drifting one on each side, prevent their being disengaged before they had produced effect. Fishing boats or schuits not drawing more than 6 or 8 feet water, might be taken charge of by officers though not thoroughly acquainted with the Spanish Gat, as the easy draft of water of vessels of this description would make the narrowness of the channel no serious difficulty, boats being placed on the inshore sand, with lights on one side, darkened on that next the land. A north and NE wind would be favourable for this attempt, as a retreat is then secured to the boats and crews of the fire vessels

through the King's Channel, when our light cruisers would be ready to pick them up.

If the plan by the common fire brigs be adopted, both description of vessels may be successfully used, but the King's Channel must be the entrance and the retreat by the Spanish Gat.

A successful attack upon the enemy by fire vessels would most probably induce them to retire from the outer road for a time, and then the vessels for sinking, being ready, might be used as I have suggested. In attacks generally made by fire vessels, the ill success of them has arisen from an opinion that the danger was lessened by exploding as soon as possible; but this appears to me an evident misconception; for when the fire be close to an enemy he is so much engaged in self-preservation that he does not think of annoyance; and I am satisfied that no officer should take charge of a fire ship unless he can bring his mind to place her either alongside or else athwart hawse of the enemy, and then, in the confusion, he will, in nine instances in ten, escape himself and destroy his object of attack.

To obtain good information, an officer well acquainted with the Texel should be sent in a fast sailing lugger or row-boat, and from his report your lordship might judge a great deal. If you should think I could be useful in this way, and you thought proper to give me leave of absence from the sea-fencibles here, and would let me have the lugger commanded by Timothy Gosling, who formerly commanded the Vigilant lugger on that station, I would most readily undertake this service and engage to bring your lordship a clear account of the force and situation of the enemy. In mentioning this man I am induced to do so from having had an opportunity of observing his

conduct when making a passage from the Texel in his vessel, from his perfect knowledge of the Dutch coast and from his being, I am sure, a bold, daring, enterprizing man.

I have the honour to be . . .

Note by Rear-Admiral Gambier

[Autograph.]

The King's Channel is already so much filled up as to be impassable. The Sculpen Gat is too near the batteries to make any attempt with hope of success.

It will require more information to form an opinion upon the project with fire vessels.

Note by Rear-Admiral Patton

[Autograph.]

28th August.

All attempt to shut up ports by sinking vessels I think will prove abortive, nor is it a generous measure even if it could be done, especially to the Dutch, who have been, and may again be our ally. If one channel be shut up, a better one may be opened by the natural operation of the water from the Zuyder See.

From the common dictates of humanity I am likewise against burning ships by surprise in ports. But it may also be observed that such attempts expose this country to attacks of the same kind, to which we are more open than our enemy.

P. P.

Note by Lord Garlies

[Autograph.]

I perfectly agree with Admiral Patton. The Zuyder See must have a vent; that vent can scarcely be worce or more perplexing to the Dutch

than it is at present, and an attempt to render it more so may very probably open a more commodious and direct channel, independent of the success being dubious.

With respect to the fire vessels, their success in every instance must solely depend upon the degree of courage of the united commanders, which has, from the peculiar nature of that service (when quarter from an enemy is not to be expected), proved almost always insufficient for any general effect. The wind, being always fair when those attempts are made, can never have produced the general want of success. I also think the greater exposure of our own harbours should deter us from practising this mode of warfare.

GARLIES.

Thomas Collier to J. D. Thomson

My dear Sir,—As the Texel plan of my brother can no longer be of any use, I will beg the favour of your letting me have it any time within a couple of days; the Duke of Gloucester wants to refer to it for a particular object.

I told my brother the reasoning on his proposition. He says he is sure your lord cannot have formed an opinion so destitute of science as to suppose sinking a vessel below low water mark can ever change the natural current of water, though it will add to the natural difficulty of navigation. Was the obstruction above the surface of water, the reasoning would have foundation, but not otherwise. He adds, whenever you have peace, the loss of the opportunity will be felt and lamented.

He appears not a little galled at his letters never having received any reply whatever.

Lord Castlereagh¹ to Lord Barham[Holograph. *Private*.]

3 o'clock. [? 19th September.]

My dear Lord,—We think it material without loss of time to send to Hambro and Malta to prevent any further advances being made to the Austrian Government. We also wish to have the best means of satisfying our friends upon the question of Boulogne, which, under all the difficulties it seems to present, deserves at least to be considered. With this view, perhaps, your lordship would see no objections to order Sir S. Smith and Captain Owen of the *Immortalité* up to town, to be with you on Monday morning, bringing with them the late Ordnance Survey and any information they have either as to the coast, the interior of the country immediately around Boulogne, or the defences of the place, landing of troops, &c.

I am, my dear Lord,

Faithfully yours,

CASTLEREAGH.

Intelligence sent to Lord Keith

Flushing. 22nd September, 1805.

My Lord,—The two frigates are expected to sail in about three weeks, there being an order arrived and men come in part, and the rest are coming from Boulogne to man them completely; they are destined for Brest. The expedition at Helvoetsluys is all stopped and the transport vessels which was hired are paid off. Yesterday, about 300 of the French colonial troops which went

¹ Secretary for War, in succession to the Earl of Camden.

from here to Holland, returned here again. The smuggling luggers I mentioned in my last are getting ready. About twenty men from Folkstone are arrived, and, by the return of the smuggling vessels, they expect 120 more to man them complete. They are three fine luggers, 16 and 20 guns each, and about fifty men each, and all bound about Bomer and the Red Head, and will sail in about three weeks. The ship I have wrote you about, the *Zwiling Riyet*, loaded with masts, will sail in about four or six days, bound to Havre de Grâce, but she is Dutch property. The American ships that come from Antwerp take in here about 500 and 800 tubs of gin each, which they work out into the Hoveling boats about Folkstone and Hastings.

I have sent you two papers, the 18th and 20th. We have no troops here of any account and if any thing should strike you about us, I can procure pilots and will come over at any time.

Lord Barham to Sir Sidney Smith

[Autograph; press copy.]

[? 30th September.]

My dear Sir,—In order to prevent any obstruction in carrying on your business, I have this day sent an order to Sir A. Hamond to imprest to you, as occasion may require, £30,000. Lord Castlereagh's letter will explain, and how the cutter is to be received in the service. From this time therefore, you must follow your own judgment as to expenses and make [further] requisitions other [than] through Lord Keith. Whatever I can do to forward your business, I shall be very ready to do, but I [have too much] on my hands to enter into details.

If you wish for Lord Keith to have a general power for granting you leave to be absent, you will desire it by letter to the board. I will cause it to be [considered] with, but they will not carry on a separate correspondence while you are under his command. It was to prevent this that I suggested giving you an imprest.

Yours sincerely,

BARHAM.

[Autograph draft.]

[Not dated.]

Lord Barham's attention is so much confined to the great lines of business that he cannot attend to the detail. He would therefore recommend to Sir Sidney Smith to continue his correspondence through Lord Keith, under whose command he is, and to forbear teasing the admiralty with solicitations regarding officers and men that would be inconsistent for the admiralty to grant and, if granted, could be of no use to the individual but disappointment. He would also recommend to him economy in making use of the money committed to his charge; for as every proper expense will be allowed when his account comes under examination, yet improper ones will undoubtedly be construed as an imprest. The *Pompée* is under orders to be got ready as fast as possible and will undoubtedly be sent to sea as soon as she can be manned. Sir Sidney therefore had better turn his attention towards that ship as she is coming forward; as she, as well as the *Kent*, are much wanted by Lord Nelson.

Lord Keith to Lord Barham

1st October, 1805.

My dear Lord,—Now the seamen are at liberty, the seas will swarm with privateers and many are now out. We shall want some fast brig-sloops, for the gun-brigs cannot overtake them, as they are mostly luggers or cutters. The purchased sloops on this station are no use but to resist an invasion—they sail so ill; yet they may answer as convoy ships if the present set are discharged, which are, I believe, very expensive. But, thank God, we have been very fortunate with our convoys all along.

I have the honour to be . . .

3rd October, 1805.

My dear Lord,—I have sent Sir S. Smith's public letter and my answer to the board; he sent it by express with the enclosed; he has told me nothing we did not know these two last years, and as for attempting to burn a few vessels in that extensive Road of Boulogne, it is nonsense; we shall get our ships crippled, fail of success, and be at a great expense. In the former business,¹ each explosion cost 200 barrels of gunpowder—£800; vessel, &c.—1200; besides boats and 13 carcasses, some holding — cwt.² of gunpowder. If government really intend to destroy the vessels in Boulogne it must be done by a large military force and a well digested plan; or by

¹ 2nd October, 1804.

² By 'carcasses' Keith seems to mean the 'coffers' or 'catamarans' described in James's *Naval History*, iii. 232. Keith's figures are hopelessly blurred; but James speaks of their containing 40 barrels of powder.

a dash in a dark night by a few determined seamen, well prepared to set fire and return instantly to their boats. Both schemes are attended with risk.

I am with respect . . . servant,

KEITH.

Sir S. Smith complains of want of force. If your lordship look at his list, it is as numerous as at any time during the war and, in my mind, perfectly equal to the present state of things on that coast.

Lord Castlereagh to Lord Barham

[*Holograph.*]

Downing Street. 4th October, 1805.

My dear Lord,—As soon as I have seen Sir J. Moore with respect to the present state of the enemy's coast, I shall be very desirous of conferring with your lordship upon it. In the meantime I shall only observe that Lord Keith, probably from not being aware of the nature of the proposed operation, seems to have mis-stated the real question for consideration. His lordship argues the hazard and inutility of attacking the flotilla of the enemy when advanced in Boulogne Bay, under the protection of their batteries. As a general principle of warfare, it may have been proved to be dangerous and unprofitable; but the only question at present is whether these advanced vessels, by any means within our reach to apply, can be disposed, so as to admit of the rocket launches approaching near enough to arrive within range of the basin, namely, within 2500 yards.

I am, my dear lord, with great regard,

Very faithfully yours,

CASTLEREAGH.

[Holograph.]

Walmer Castle. 12th October.

My dear Lord,—We have had a very satisfactory conversation with Lord Keith, Sir Sidney, &c., as to the Boulogne operations, the substance of which I will send you as soon as Lord Keith returns the original. I think the report of the surveyors as to distance is sufficiently encouraging to make the attempt, as an experiment, desirable.

I am, my dear Lord,

Faithfully yours,

CASTLEREAGH.

Lord Keith to Lord Barham

12th October, 1805.

My Lord,—I returned from Walmer this morning, where I had met Lord Castlereagh, Mr. Pitt, Sir S. Smith, Mr. Francis¹ and Mr. Congreve. The plans seemed determined upon, and I was only asked about the means of putting them into execution. Sir Sidney seemed to have only one wish, which is to get all the force in this coast put under his direction, to create an *éclat* in the papers; Mr. Francis is full of coffers, carcasses and submarine boats, which will not answer here; and Mr. Congreve, who is ingenious, is wholly wrapt up in rockets from which I expect little success, for Mr. Congreve has no idea of the means of applying them professionally. Lord Castlereagh is to write the instruction, which will then come officially through the admiralty to me; but in the meantime I am exerting myself to comply as far as is possible with the minister's intention, in furnishing the required force. I did

¹ This appears to be an *alias* adopted by Robert Fulton on his leaving France. Cf. Desbrière, *Projets et Tentatives*, ii. 279.

not flatter anyone with the hope of success ; but if we have an active campaign, the flotilla will soon fall into decay, without either expense or risk.

It is now some time since your lordship hinted an intention of making some alteration in this command ; and now, that the enemy's troops are withdrawn from the coast, seems a favourable moment for my retiring without giving any offence to a government I have a good opinion of ; and whenever your lordship is disposed to make any new arrangement, I will write a public letter to the board.

I have the honour to be . . .

Lord Castlereagh to L.C.A.

[Signed.]

Downing Street. 16th October, 1805.

My Lords,—Having directed a military survey to be made of the harbour of Boulogne, with the view of ascertaining how far it may be practicable to approach within such a distance of the basin as to bring it within range of rockets of a combustible nature lately prepared by Mr. Congreve, and the report received being favourable, I am directed to convey to your Lordships his Majesty's commands that you do issue the necessary orders for causing an attempt to be made, supported by an adequate naval force, thereby to set fire to and destroy the enemy's flotilla in that harbour.

Lord Keith to Lord Barham

18th October, 1805.

My Lord,—I have a letter from Lord Castlereagh nearly to the same effect with that from your lordship. I shall certainly prepare myself

to answer your questions without resting till I have done so. Secrecy is the first object, or giving some other plausible destination; the next is to know the real place of landing, that I may judge the sort of vessel which can enter the river or port. I have mentioned this to Lord Castlereagh; and that as troops may be quartered in Essex and in the north, the places of embarkation might be fixed at Harwich, Hull, or Yarmouth, and one rendezvous for the whole when completed. As the season gets late, no time is to spare; it might accelerate business if I came to town for a day after the second embarkation is over, which will be Wednesday, I hope. The weather has been bad, but we go on as well as can be. I mean to send the *Edgar* with the guards, to see them as far as Heligoland and then return. The small ships may go into the Elbe and a certain number of them return, leaving sufficient to protect the transports in the river.

I have the honour to be, with the greatest regard . . .

Lord Barham to Lord Keith.

[Autograph; press copy.] Admiralty. 18th October, 1805.

My dear Lord,—Instruments of destruction are of very little consequence if they cannot be applied, and which has always appeared to me to be impracticable. But to come to another subject, in which there appears to be a prospect of success, I wish to impart to you that at present there is a great appearance of things going on well to the northward; and if it continues so, it is probable an attempt may be made on Holland from this country. This measure, if carried into execution,

will require all the assistance you can give, through your small craft, for conveying the troops. I wish therefore, my dear lord, that you would take the subject under consideration and, by concentrating your force, how many troops could be embarked on board the frigates, sloops and smaller vessels under your command.

The object is a very great and desirable one and well worth consideration. We have no enemy at present to contend with in the North but the Dutch; and if they are invaded, that must of course vanish. A part of the crews may be taken out to make more room for the troops and I should really hope that, with the assistance of the transports, a very large number may be sent over. When this measure is matured I will inform you; but as in every kind of business, preparation is the road to success, I shall wish to know what arrangement you would propose for employing your smaller vessels on this service and how many men you could embark in them in case of being called on. The putting them into divisions will naturally occur, but of this and every other measure I shall hope to hear from you. The whole of the force under your command will be at your disposal to carry this business into execution.

I am, my dear Lord,
sincerely yours,
BARHAM.

Lord Keith to Lord Barham

20th October, 1805.

My Lord,—I have the honour to send a sketch, not very exact, perhaps, but nearly so.

It is to be observed that the Downs would be left unprotected, and that the enemy, if aware

of that, might bring out a number of their craft and insult us ; but it is seldom that there are not some new comers in the Downs or new fitted ships which require a day or two to put to right.

The next point is the taking away the few fast-sailing ships, even for an hour, as the privateers are so numerous ; and, indeed, they carry so few men it is hardly worth while to disturb them from the present service ; and if there is no danger from Prussia, the transports may return so soon as they have landed the men now embarked.

I have the honour to be . . .

22nd October, 1805.

My dear Lord,—As it appears neither of the frigates attached to Admiral Russell are in Yarmouth, I have taken the *Venus*, Sir Sidney Smith, and ordered her to Yarmouth to receive the nobleman intended to sail in her. The convoy of Germans had orders to proceed and only wait a change of wind—now east, blowing hard. The *Adamant* will take the second embarkation as far as Heligoland. I am now embarking the rifle corps ; the Guards to-morrow.

I have the honour to be, with great regard . . .

Lord Barham to Lord Keith

[*Autograph ; press copy.*]

[Not dated.]

My dear Lord,—The admiralty board are of opinion that the enclosed letters should be sent officially to your lordship and even mentioned [to] the king ; but I have overruled both opinions, as I

III.

M

flatter myself the impossibility of doing anything essential without an army will very soon become manifest and release us from the anxiety of seeing our bravest men cut to pieces in fruitless attempts. There seems to me such a want of judgment in our friend Sir Sidney, that it is much safer to employ him under command than in command.

I have never met with two opinions from professional men on the subject of attacking the enemies' vessels while under their batteries.

To support this kind of warfare, after the experience we have had, will bring our judgment with the public into disrepute, and end in nothing but disgrace. The vessels employed upon it might be used to much more advantage in protecting our trade to the westward, or in convoying the ships that are intended

[The rest is missing.]

Lord Castlereagh to Lord Keith

[Copy.]

Downing Street. 24th October, 1805.

My dear Lord,—I have to request your lordship, on the receipt of this, will make an arrangement in the Downs to receive on board king's ships about 5,000 men, as far as you can without interfering with the service at Boulogne. It is material, however, they should be collected without delay. The place of debarkation will probably be the Scheldt, with a view to Flushing. Under present circumstances I think it most probable that the armament now in readiness will not, in the first place, proceed to the Elbe. I mention this in the strictest confidence, that your lordship may select the ships accordingly.

I hope your lordship will be enabled to make

your arrangements so early to-morrow, as to reach town to-morrow evening ; and if you could make it convenient to take your bed at Sheen, we might settle our minds on future arrangements, and return to town in the morning, prepared for business with Lord Barham.

I have settled with Lord Barham that the lighter ships under your flag, from the Nore and the ports north of the Thames, should be ordered to the Downs immediately, to facilitate your lordship's arrangements.

*Lord Keith and Sir John Moore to Lord
Castlereagh*

[Signed.]

Deal. 30th October, 1805.

My Lord,—We have the honour of transmitting to your lordship the result of the examinations which we have taken from four of the best informed people to whom we have been able to resort, respecting the state of the fortifications on the Island of Walcheren, and other circumstances connected with the object of an enterprise against it ; from which it appears that no attempt can be made within the river (i.e. from West Capell to Flushing) because there is no position in which the ships of war could cover the descent ; and that the side on which the landing could be made with the greatest facility is between West and East Capell. Your lordship will observe by the testimony laid before us, the nature and extent of the obstacles that offer to its success by the kind of anchorage that the fleet must take up, and the hazard of northerly winds ; and we therefore leave it to your lordship to determine how far it

may be expedient to prosecute the object at this season of the year.

We have the honour to be, my lord,
Your lordship's most obedient and
most humble servants,

KEITH,
JOHN MOORE (*M. General*).

Lord Keith to Lord Barham

10th November, 1805.

My dear Lord,—The men from Flushing are returned ; I send the report to Lord Castlereagh. Of course it will come before your lordship, and you will observe the French frigates are on the move, and an unfinished Dutch frigate going round to Helvoetsluys ; it is quite cruel that I have nothing to send out to intercept them. The *Immortalité*, *Venus*, *Vestal*, are with Sir S. Smith, which intended service seems to have no end ; the *Fortune*, *Astrea* with ambassadors ; *Orpheus*, *Sibyl* with money ; *Leopard* with troops ; *Adamant* going with d°. I have sent a cutter to Admiral Russell desiring him to divide his squadron if he sees nothing in the Texel to render such a measure imprudent, and I hope you will approve.

I understand the projectors are all so attached to their respective plans, which are so numerous and so distinct, that they are all quarrelling. Among others, they have Captain M. Smith, Johnson the smuggler, Robinson a marine officer, &c., &c.

I am, very sincerely,
Your lordship's faithful servant,
KEITH.

I am just informed of a change of flag.¹ The men left Flushing yesterday, the 9th, in the early morning.

15th November, 1805.

My Lord,—I have ordered two cutters to Admiral Cornwallis, but of such as sail fast I have none. We are now overrun with little privateers; last night two off the North Foreland, two off Dover; they laugh at the cutters; brig-sloops are the only vessels they stand in awe of. Perhaps some fast American schooners might keep them under. If government bought the two luggers I mentioned yesterday, the Edgar and Utrecht could send them men and a good officer; but I am inclined to hope our late successes will lessen the call for line-of-battle ships, and your lordship will be able to bring on some small craft.

I am very sincerely . . .

15th November, 1805.

My dear Lord,—There is another very fast French lugger taken; there is one in this harbour; it will sell very cheap as the smuggling is at a stand. I assure your lordship if they were fitted by government, they would do more against the little privateers than all our hired cutters, who sail ill, and fight as little as is possible.

I am, &c. . . .

Ramsgate Pier. 5 o'clock.

My dear Lord,—The Flushing frigates are out. It is impossible they can make any way in this wind. I send to Portsmouth in case they bear up

¹ By the 'Trafalgar' promotion of 9th November, from blue to white at the main.

to the westward. I have sent out the Adamant and Triton. Perhaps your lordship will run an express to Russell.

I am, faithfully . . .

16th November, 1805.

My Lord,—The Fortune is returned and may go to the Texel; La Sybille is at the Nore, but not under command; I have stopped the Resistance at the Nore, to be completed and paid, seeing the French frigates were out. Your lordship will see, by the only letter I have had from Sir Sidney Smith since I returned, that they are not prepared. It is now six weeks that a large force has been locked up by him, and on the 10th October he said in four days all would be ready; I hope he will not be permitted to keep them much longer. Ministers will be attacked about it and the expense; there are men employed at Dover to send information to your opponents.

If Prussia comes on, as I hope, and the weather keeps open, I shall go off the coast of Holland to be ready to administer any assistance a ship can and to stop all the channels of escape.

I have the honour to be . . .

Vice-Admiral Russell to Lord Barham.

[Holograph.]

Sunday, 8 A.M. 17th November, [1805].

My Lord,—I have this moment received your lordship's letter of yesterday respecting the sailing of the two French frigates from Flushing, and am with all possible dispatch unmooring the squadron with (I fear the vain) hope of intercepting them, by stretching to the northward and eastward until

the spring tides call my attention to the Texel. To explain to your lordship this unpleasant affair, I beg leave to enclose a copy of my letter to Lord Keith on the subject, by which it will appear to your lordship, that with my means I did my best.

I am, with the highest respect,
My lord,
Your lordship's obedient, humble servant,
T. M. RUSSELL.

Sir W. Sidney Smith to Lord Keith

His Majesty's ship Antelope, off Dover.

[Signed.]

17th November, 1805.

My Lord,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your lordship's letter of the 15th instant. I have already accounted for the return not having reached you in due time, by stating that I found myself obliged, from the urgency of the service, to give my attention, in preference, to the objects connected with the prompt readiness of the launches; observing, with your lordship, the necessity of executing that branch of service committed to my direction without the smallest delay, in order that we might profit by the easterly wind, while it lasted and ensured us smoother water on the opposite side the Channel than we can have with westerly winds.

Under this conviction and with this view, I urged the launches coming out of the harbour yesterday evening, as soon as the tide served in the evening; ¹ I overruled all objections, and having Mr. Congreve's consent, I gave orders at sunset

¹ The semicolon here is the writer's.

to Captain Tidy of the *Diligence*, to the lieutenants commanding the gun-brigs to which the launches are attached and the sub-lieutenants commanding them, to bring them out immediately, intending to profit by the remainder of the weather tide and stretch across while the weather was moderate and the wind at east. Such, however, is the inefficacy of some of the gun-brigs and the indiscipline of their crews, that though I sent in all the aid of the squadron in boats to assist, many of them lost their tide, and it was not till the morning's flood that the launches reached their respective vessels. One sunk suddenly and unaccountably, after she was attached—it is supposed from a butt starting. The *Gemini*, double-galley, being found leaky, from her scantling being too slight for the additional weight, has filled ; but being made buoyant, expressly by the addition of cork, she remains afloat, and I have ordered her into the harbour again.

We are riding out the lee-tide, and I have made the horary signal to weigh at seven, when we shall have the weather-tide, without which we should fetch nowhere on the opposite coast with the wind so far to the southward. As it is, I have no right to expect that we shall fetch into Boulogne bay, but I am determined not to allow any consideration to delay our making our utmost effort to obey the instructions we are under. At the same time, I shall not fail to keep in mind your lordship's injunctions, and the information you have been pleased to give me of the situation of Boulogne bay. The enemy are precisely in the situation your lordship described to me as habitual to them, according to the winds ; and considering your lordship apprised thereof, I thought it unnecessary to communicate the morning and evening reports

I ordered to be sent me daily, and which I have constantly received by the vigilance of Captains Owen, Digby and Matson.

I have the honour to enclose the latest report for your lordship's information, by which you will observe the enemy have an advanced guard, as usual during easterly winds ; they seem however to have an increased vigilance, and no doubt expect an attack of some kind, so that I by no means count on being able to surprise them. Your lordship, however, may count on our doing the utmost possible under the circumstances we may find on our approach, without risking too much at random, or acting without a fair prospect of success equal to the risk inseparable from war.

I have the honour . . .

11 o'clock P.M.

P.S.—The Florence cutter, which is to land this to be conveyed with all dispatch to your lordship, not having closed, I am enabled to say we are stretching across under easy sail, so as not to distress the launches. The little sea there is being too much for them to have their rocket frames and apparatus aloft, the arrangement thereof must necessarily be made on the French side the water ; and it is a question in Mr. Congreve's mind whether with new men, though intelligent and willing, he can succeed in fixing the frames, placing the rockets, and priming them so as to ensure a simultaneous and certain operation in the dark. We can but try ; perhaps we shall have light enough when the moon rises, without having (so late in the last quarter) too much, so as to be too conspicuous on our approach. Your lordship may be assured there is every disposition on Mr. Congreve's part, to do whatever may be practicable ; no exertion on

his part has been or will be wanting, I am sure ; and every aid has been and shall be given him towards bringing this experiment to a prompt conclusion. The conviction of all employed being necessarily strong, that we have no right to expect a continuance of easterly wind after having had it in that quarter so long, and considering the advanced season of the year. We trust we shall find smoother water as we get round Cape Grisnez.

The brigs began to come out on the evening of the 14th inst. The report did not reach me till after the Dragoon left me on Friday evening, or I should not have omitted to mention it.

Lord Barham to (?) Mr. Pitt.

Admiralty. 18th November, 1805.

[*Rough Copy. Autograph.*]

My dear Sir,—Lord Keith cannot feel more than I do the misapplication of our sea force off Dungeness. Two French frigates have escaped from Flushing, and which has been owing entirely to want of ships to blockade that port ; and the Texel squadron will equally slip through our hands if we have not the use of our frigates. Much as I condemn this romantic kind of warfare, I have suppressed my sentiments because you and Lord Castlereagh take so great a share in it ; but when I daily see the number of privateers increasing from the Dutch shores, and the Dutch squadron ready to take advantage of our weakness, the stake becomes of moment. For these six weeks past, one third part of Lord Keith's command has been waiting on Sir Sidney Smith. It grieves me to have lost these frigates. Admiral Cornwallis and Lord Gardner are made acquainted with the

probability of their going north about, and a line of battle ship has had orders to keep a look [out] off Cape Finisterre. Lord Keith, too, is directed to send cruisers off the coast of Norway and the Orkney islands. All this would have been unnecessary if Lord Keith had been able to have blockaded Flushing and the Scheldt.

Yours most faithfully,

BARHAM.

The Texel squadron are in want of frigates, and I have pressed Lord Keith never to suffer them to be without two heavy ones. Two frigates are also kept ready at Cork as I am inclined to think that Goree and Sierra Leone may be the object of the Flushing frigates.

Vice-Admiral Holloway to Lord Keith.

19th, 10 A.M.

My dear Lord,—I have just received the enclosed, which I forward, without disturbing your lordship's house; as I believe you cannot have been furnished with any information from Sir S. Smith, and you must naturally be anxious to hear what progress he has made in his operations upon the enemy after an absence of two days, at this changeable season; fortunate for us, perhaps, that nothing has, or may now be attempted.

Always your lordship's faithfully,

J. HOLLOWAY.

Sir Sidney has not done anything; and as the wind now is, he cannot stay at his anchorage. How we shall be laughed at by Monsieur Robin. If Mr. Congreve's squibs require such a combination

of things to be let off with effect I fear they will not be used this winter.

Your Lordship's,
J. HOLLOWAY.

Sir W. Sidney Smith to Lord Keith

His Majesty's Sloop Diligence, off Boulogne.

[Signed.]

22nd November, 1805.

My Lord,—Our guard boats were cannonaded yesterday morning for an hour by the enemy's line, on their withdrawing at daylight. The enemy's pinnaces are numerous and row extremely well, but they are shy of approaching our boats, though superior in size, force, and power of movement. I restrain the ardour of our young officers, to prevent useless conflicts between them; some of them stayed too long under the enemy's fire yesterday, but no accident happened.

The perfect calm of yesterday encouraged me to hope for a continuance during the night of such favourable weather, for a near approach with the launches, and every preparation was made by Mr. Congreve, with his apparatus. All was ready before dark, and every disposition of the boats made; but a degree of swell set in, in the evening, with a breeze from the northward; it increased too much for the launches so incumbered to be manageable with their oars; but as it was a leading wind, in and out, I determined to carry them into action by towing them astern of the gun brigs, under whose protecting fire, with that of the bombs, they act with fewer men exposed, and with a certainty of a safe retreat afterwards. For this purpose I ordered the bombs to open their fire, shifting my flag to this ship, she being of lighter draft of water than the Antelope, and directed

Lieutenant Price to lead her in, he being recommended to me particularly by Captain Owen, as best acquainted with the local pilotage, and as a man of determined enterprise. He undertook it readily, and the order was given to bear up, so as to be in on the turn of the tide.

At this moment Captain Owen came on board to me, and represented that, as the wind was drawing round to the north-west, with a swell setting in, and every appearance of a gale, it would be impossible to get out again. My confidence in this officer's experience on the spot, and my knowledge of his enterprising spirit, satisfied my mind that he would not dissuade me from the attempt if it was practicable; I therefore (though reluctantly) recalled my definitive order given to Lieut. Price and the lieutenants commanding the gun-brigs, and hauled off the shore. We had reason to be glad before morning, that we were not embarrassed deeper in the bay; for the wind remains fixed at north-west, so that had we succeeded in displacing them, the swell is such, with the wind in this direction, that we could not have profited thereby, and must have lost the launches at least, if not the gun-brigs and inshore division of ships employed.

It would be great injustice if I omitted to mention the steady zeal that has been manifested by the officers and men under my orders while on this service of anxiety and risk. I am persuaded all feel equal regret with myself that adverse elements prevented us from closing with the enemy. I have taken Lieut. Andrew Morries as my flag-lieutenant into this ship, not having one in the *Antelope* to bring with me. The *Lord Keith* cutter, being destined for service inshore, and Lieutenant Mitchell Roberts volunteering his services to

remain out, on the Florence being ordered in with the four men wounded in the Vesuvius's gig, I have put him into the Lord Keith, and send Sub-Lieut. Spilsbury¹ of the Exertion in with this dispatch, as he was the nearest inshore and used the rockets from the Sagittarius, consequently enabled to enter into such details as I omit. I have given him an order to act in the Florence cutter, and if Lieutenant Morries is confirmed a lieutenant, of which he is highly deserving, being always ready on any service, and near two years acting as lieutenant in the cutter, I hope Sub-Lieutenant Spilsbury may be considered by their lordships as also deserving a commission as lieutenant.

Captain Tidy, of the Diligence, has had much trouble in carrying through the details of this arrangement, which he has done to my satisfaction. Captain Kellwick, senior commander of the bombs, obeyed my orders with alacrity to take the distance of his range from the enemy's line, and Captain Seccombe was always a volunteer on the hazardous service of placing the carcasses on the cables of the enemy's vessels, and is anxious for opportunities of more active service than the Utrecht affords him. He speaks in high terms of the lieutenant of the Vesuvius's boat, who was with him on that service under the bows of the vessel.

Lord Keith to Lord Barham

23rd November, 1805.

My Lord,—I have sent you Sir Sidney's last letter. I hear one of the Edgar's boats is missing, with thirteen of our best men, supposed taken. Mr. Spilsbury, who Sir Sidney has appointed

¹ Lieutenant, 27th December, 1805. See Marshall, viii. 89.

a lieutenant for his merit, is a midshipman of his in the Mediterranean, and who he sent for on this occasion to be made a lieutenant. He was in another ship.

Your lordship will observe the French frigates are returned to Flushing. I have ordered the *Leopard* and *Resistance* to watch them (by express) and if they do sail I think either these or the two to the northward must meet them. There is a fleet in sight ; I hope some are transports for the German cavalry.

[*Holograph.*]

25th November, 1805.

My Lord,—Sir Sidney has been with me ; said he had no report to make ; some men had been lost in boats swamped. We conversed on the different plans ; he confessed the impracticability of either succeeding ; the carcasses produced no effect ; some did not explode, and may be in the hands of the enemy. The rockets were fired without effect ; some of them burst in our own boats, and none went in the intended direction. Yet, my lord, I am not sure that things may be stated to others as they have been represented to me, because it has often happened so, on many occasions. I would therefore call your lordship's attention to facts : that since the 10th October, 33 vessels of war and 200 men out of the large stationary [*? force*] have been diverted from the general duties of the coast ; that the service required has taken every ship from off Admiral Holloway's district of the coast ; that the *Edgar* must go with the next convoy of troops to the continent ; that the officers and men complain of the hardships they undergo without the possibility

of attaining any object. Add to these considerations the vast expense, and I have no doubt that if your lordship interposes your professional experience with the protectors of these projects, they will abandon them; for the authors of them, I am convinced, never will, so long as they are maintained luxuriously at the expense of the nation.

I have the honour to be . . .

Lord Keith to Mr. J. D. Thomson

26th November, 1805.

Dear Sir,—In consequence of your note I sent a dragoon to Deal with orders for the *Venus* or *Vestal*, whichever might be in the Downs, to proceed to Yarmouth, there to await Lord Cathcart. It is time he was off; the ice may be looked for soon. You see I am obliged to plunder Sir Sidney, having no other frigates. We have had seven weeks of that nonsense, which is the theme of much ridicule in the squadron.

I am very sincerely yours,

KEITH.

Sir Sidney Smith to Lord Barham

Antelope: Walmer Road.

[Holograph.]

26th November, 1805.

My dear Lord,—My official report to Lord Keith will have reached your lordship and shewn you that we were prevented engaging the enemy's advanced division in Boulogne bay, and throwing the rockets from the point indicated while so engaged, by a sudden shift of wind and increase of swell at the moment of going into action; our attack was thus confined to throwing a few shells

from the bomb ships—the mortar boats being unable to bear the sea and gone back. The enemy's line went into harbour on the gale becoming too much for them to ride outside, and we withdrew from the fight. Our guard boats, though inferior in size and number to the enemy's pinnaces, armed with rockets (which we find to ricochet on the water and go to the range of a piece of larger calibre than a six pounder, which is the class of shell and carcass they carry), can drive them in at any time that an attempt of this kind may be required in future, but it is too late in the year at present for boat work, and I presume I shall now be allowed to shift my flag to the *Pompée*, which ship is reported to me by Captain Dacres to be nearly ready except men. The joiners are in my cabin at present.

If it is, as I am taught to believe, intended that I am to command a detached inshore squadron, I shall have to point out some enterprising officers, well acquainted with pilotage, that will be of infinite use in such service. I shall confine myself at present to naming Lieutenant Hanchett¹ commanding the *Virago* G.V. at Plymouth, in order that time may be gained in fitting her for foreign service if she be so employed; and Lieutenant James Boxer² in the *Courier* cutter, fitting at Dover to go off Brest.

The *Antelope* requires docking and payment. She was built at Sheerness, where the officers of the yard are much inclined to do justice to her

¹ John Martin Hanchett; was posted in 1809, made a C.B. at the peace, and died in 1819.

² A captain of 1814; brother of Edward Boxer, also a follower of Smith's, whose name, as a rear-admiral, came into prominence when harbour-master at Balaklava, in 1854. See O'Byrne.

as a favourite ship ; but if she cannot be docked there, and your lordship would favour me and Captain Bazely so far as to allow her to go on foreign service with me, armed with Gower's 24-pounders (perhaps she might be docked at Plymouth), she would be a most efficient ship and do much service. I beg leave to enclose a memo. of officers acting in vacancies, for whom I request confirmation on the ground of their merits.

I am, my dear Lord,
Yours faithfully,
W. SIDNEY SMITH.

Lord Keith to Lord Barham

3rd December, 1805.

My Lord,—It is now ascertained that two frigates are out of Flushing. I hope ours may be fortunate. It is a pity Russell did not send out ships two by two, with orders to meet him off the Texel at the springs. I hope the accounts are not so bad as has been represented by the Dutch admiral.

I am your lordship's . . .

Lord Keith to Mr. J. D. Thomson

Ramsgate. 29th December, 1 P.M.

Dear Sir,—I am sorry to say I hear a firing in the direction of Boulogne, but it is not continued along the shore, such as has been the case on great occasions ; it may therefore be nothing. A report prevails here (which may be an idle one) of Admiral Cornwallis's resignation. If you know this to be true, will you say to Lord Barham

(who I do not like to trouble on reports) that I should like to have the refusal of that command; for although this is an honourable and great command, yet I see little prospect of having any opportunity of distinguishing oneself; and as I am now advanced in my 58th year, I hope never to serve after this war, and therefore should like to have finished with the highest command; but I beg you to recollect that all this is provided Lord Gardner, who is my senior, declines—for so it is reported here. I should be sorry to interfere with a superior of his character, and far less to ask Lord Barham to do an act unpopular in the service.

I am, dear Sir,
Yours very sincerely,
KEITH.

Lord Keith to Lord Barham

[Holograph.]

Ramsgate. 30th December, 1805.

My Lord,—I am honoured by your lordship's letter per express service. I had a dispatch from Lord Castlereagh, and your lordship will observe the measures I have adopted thereupon. I had prepared a tender to carry orders to Admiral Russell, but your lordship's having sent them from the board renders it unnecessary to send her; but the vice-admiral shall be out in force by the springs, and all the cruisers should be out before the troops can be embarked. At this moment there are sixteen armed ships and vessels in the Hanoverian rivers. I have written to the senior officers in both rivers to be prepared; also to Lord Cathcart, to send officers to each river to concert measures with the naval officers. I likewise wrote the principal agent of transports

to be prepared in every respect ; and in truth I think there is tonnage enough there to bring away all the troops, provided none has been sent away of which I am ignorant. I suppose orders are given to send all the troops and horses which are at the different ports of Portsmouth, Harwich, Yarmouth, or the Humber.

I have the honour to be with high respect. . . .

9th January, 1806.

My dear Lord,—What occasioned me to write to Mr. Thomson and not to your lordship was the uncertainty of Admiral Cornwallis's intention, and its being merely a report from the Channel fleet handed to me from Deal. So circumstanced, I did not think it becoming to trouble your lordship.

I am considering your lordship's letter respecting the commands, and shall submit some observations on it by to-morrow's post, and a copy of a letter to the Duke of York on the subject of defence, which I wrote at the desire of government two years ago. It is true things have changed appearances since that period ; and if it is meant to invade, I think they must change again, and that the attempt must be made from various points at or near the same time. Boulogne is the place of all others the most easy to watch ; and when in the Road, the flotilla is most exposed to danger from weather and, when numerous, to attack, which will at least disorder if not destroy.

I have sent Captain Owen to the Elbe ; he is active and intelligent, and will be useful in shipping off, when it is required to do so.

Some enquiry ought to be made into the cause of the loss of the transports on the coast of Holland. The sailing of the convoys has been disgraceful in

every instance, and I have reason to think the Helder and others never joined the convoy at all. The ships of war sailed in the morning, and lay to off the Foreland, firing the whole day; it was dark before many of the transports left the Downs (the Helder one); and I am told many of the land officers were in the streets of Deal at four o'clock in the afternoon, keeping the transports' boats on shore.

I have the honour to be, with great regard,
Your lordship's most obedient
and obliged humble servant,

KEITH.

Minute (in pencil)—Extract given to Sir R. George.¹

[*Holograph.*]

10th January, 1806.

My Lord,—Your lordship will please to observe that in my remarks I have said: cannot come out in less than four tides. My private opinion is not less than six, for I have never seen more than 200 come out on any one tide all the times I have been off Boulogne.²

A considerable expense will be incurred by dividing the station into six, and the port-admirals will be worse off. The whole of my receipts since I came here is 9,000; consequently the same sum must be to share among the junior flags in an equal proportion, which is more than equal to table money.

I have the honour to be with the greatest respect . . .

¹ First commissioner for transport service.

² In popular belief, the rate at which the French troops could be embarked and got to sea has been much exaggerated. It has been commonly spoken of as an operation of 'a few hours.' Bonaparte, at one time, named 'six hours' as all that was requisite for the embarkation and crossing.

Lord Barham to Lord Keith

[Autograph; press copy.] Admiralty. 10th January, 1806.

My Lord,—By letters just received from Sir John Duckworth we are informed that he has gone in pursuit of the Rochefort squadron off the Canaries, and fallen in with another squadron of the enemy on the same errand. The issue of this measure has proved fortunate, as it puts us out of all fear from another predatory war in the West Indies, and it has come time enough to prevent our dispatching Sir John B. Warren to that country. His present orders are to cruise amongst the Canaries and Madeira for two months, on a supposition that the ships which Sir J. Duckworth fell in with are cruising; and as Sir John Strachan is to escort the great convoy to the southward of the Canaries he will [see] afterwards [that]¹ the safety of the islands are secured.

You will observe by sending Sir John Warren suddenly, the East and West Indies and Mediterranean convoys are left without an escort. Their value is very great, and if the Brest squadron should be a cruising one, they will be in imminent danger. I therefore propose sending Sir John Strachan with seven sail of the line, to accompany them till they are out of danger, and employ him afterwards on the coast of Spain and Portugal for the chance of intercepting money, frigates, or line of battle ships, coming into these ports. The East Indies is now out of the question, as that settlement must be either in our hands or the attack abandoned. The former is the most likely, as they have had no sea force to contend with and the Rochefort squadron is returning.

¹ A new slip; the junction may be doubtful, but is fairly certain. The paper, the impress, and the fading are alike.

This is all that occurs to me concerning our present movements, and I hope in a few weeks more to make an attempt on the enemies' fleet. In this attempt the opinion of professional men will accompany you, but in attempting the opposite coast without an army you will meet with no support but from projectors.

I am my dear lord,

Faithfully yours,

BARHAM.

Lord Keith to Lord Barham

15th January, 1806.

My Lord,—I observe the board has called upon Admiral Rowley to know what number of sloops will be wanted by spring for convoys, but which information he will not be able to furnish as he only sent forth the Thames convoys. Upon the whole coast—that is the Nore, Yarmouth, Humber, Leith—and two for the Liverpool trade as far as Orkney, eighteen vessels were appointed, but were not found to be sufficient, and I was frequently obliged to send sloops from other parts of the station to supply demands. There are now remaining on this command, eight purchased sloops (merchant ships fitted for war) very fit for this service, but very unfit for that on which they have been employed on the French and Flemish coast. The convoy service generally begins about the middle of March, and although two ships were ordered to attend each convoy, I never had it in my power to send more than one. There are now twelve regular sloops on this station employed against the privateers, but with little success; they sail very fast, and the distance is

so short it is scarcely possible to overtake them in so short a run, and the reserve vessels will not look at a privateer.

I have the honour to be . . .

A smuggler is arrived from Campveer. No ice in Holland.

The French busy on the ships at Antwerp. The *Furieuse* frigate, which left Flushing, is arrived at L'Orient; her destination was India, but suffered from weather and lost her companion. An English transport lost on Walcheren, all drowned; could not tell what ship. This must have been another of those transports like the *Helder*, which never joined the convoy.

1st February, 1806.

My dear Lord,—I am honoured by your letter and am much obliged by the commission you mention for a commander, and the appointment of Mr. Morgan to a lieutenant's commission. Mr. Pitt's death has made many important changes. I respected him very much, although from circumstances we had no political connection. I am sorry you are about to quit the admiralty (although I daresay you are not), for the times require knowledge and a constant application. Nothing can persuade me that any man not a seaman is fit for the office in war. I have observed it all my naval life—not a short one now.

My sister and daughter beg to be remembered; and I have the honour to be, with the greatest regard . . .

KEITH.

NAUTICUS TO LORD BARHAM

It is well to say, at once, that the writer of these remarkable letters was Keith's secretary, and that we presumably have, in them, gleanings from the conversation of Keith and the several flag officers and captains; though it may, perhaps, be thought not impossible that they were written with Keith's knowledge, and at Keith's suggestion.

London. 16th May, 1805.

My Lord,—Actuated by no motive but an anxious solicitude for the honour and interest of the country, I presume to intrude upon your lordship's patience with a few short remarks on the probable present ultimate destination of the enemy's armaments now at sea. I believe that in the multitude of counsellors there may be safety, and I have a firm persuasion that your lordship will not be indisposed to receive the suggestions of a stranger (on so important a subject) whose habits of life have given him some little knowledge of maritime affairs.

The objects to which the operations of the enemy's squadrons, lately detached, may be directed, give rise at the present moment to various conjectures; the most likely, however, are: 1st. Further depredations upon, or perhaps the seizure of some of our Leeward Islands; 2nd. The present relief, with a view to its future recovery of the Island of St. Domingo; and 3rd., and the most probable, the capture of the Island of Jamaica; and from the great strength of their land force, there is too much reason to fear that they will succeed, unless Lord Nelson has long ere now passed the Straits of Gibraltar and proceeded to join his squadron to that of Rear-Admiral Cochrane. After such a lapse of time, no other hope,

by means of naval assistance, for the safety of Jamaica, if such be the enemy's aim, is left; to employ any, would only be a wasteful expense of resources that may be usefully devoted to other important ends.

But whatever may be the objects to which these armaments are destined, there can be little doubt that they will very soon seek their way back in a body to the shores of Europe; and though I am convinced, and persuade myself that your lordship is so likewise, that no reasonable expectation can be formed of overtaking them by any detachment that can now be made from this country, or of arresting them in their progress, there is yet ground to hope that they may be intercepted on their return.

Taking it for granted that the united squadron from Cadiz has proceeded to the West Indies, it will amount, including the Rochefort ships, to—

Ships of the line	23
Add, since sailed from Rochefort	..			2
Supposed to join from Havana (but				
of this I know little)		5
				<hr/>
				30

This united force, probably destroying the whole Newfoundland fishery on its way, will confidently return to the European seas without an apprehension of meeting with any force equal to resist it, except the encounter of our Channel fleet, which they will most assuredly avoid; and therefore their course must be directed either to L'Orient, Ferrol, Cadiz, or at once into the Straits.

The vicinity of L'Orient to the station of our Channel fleet, and its ill adaptation to the reception of so many large vessels, renders it rather

improbable that they will resort there, by choice. If the enemy's view is the invasion of Ireland, Ferrol is no doubt the best harbour in which they could assemble their force ; but as an extensive expedition from that port must naturally be accompanied by a very considerable quantity of transport shipping, it may be possible, for guiding the judgment, to procure information if anything of that kind is in preparation there. An objection, too, to their returning to Ferrol, may be found in a persuasion on their part that our squadron, so long stationed there, may be reinforced to such a degree as to leave them in anxiety for the issue of a contest on a part of the coast where their disabled ships would be exposed to great danger, if they could not make Corunna or Ferrol. This anxiety it might be important to keep up.

Cadiz would certainly be a desirable port of rendezvous for this force, because it could there be united to such additional ships as the enemy, in the course of the summer, may be able to get in readiness at that port, Cartagena and Toulon ; and because it would appear politic, on the part of the enemy, to separate our force as much as possible, and remove a considerable part of it to a great distance from our sources of regular supply ; but there is still against Cadiz, the objections of our being easily able to blockade it and cut off their supplies ; and if our fleet should be even forced to shelter in Tetuan Bay, it could, generally speaking, in the winter time pass the Straits with the same Levant wind that would take the enemy out, and very probably overtake them before they could get a great many leagues from the coast. The frequent recurrence of disease at Cadiz during the autumn may be a stronger objection still.

It is at Toulon where the enemy, in the present

state of the war, could assemble an extensive fleet with the greatest prejudice to us. Should 30 sail of the line repass the Straits, it is reasonable to suppose that Carthage and Toulon would soon increase it to forty; and, without the possession of the Island of Minorca, I hold it morally impossible that we could maintain an equal fleet in that sea, nor could our convoys to Malta and the Levant pass or repass with the least chance of security. If Egypt and our expulsion from the Mediterranean are still favourite objects with the enemy—of which no doubt can be entertained—such an event would put it completely in their power to carry extensive and repeated embarkations to Egypt, and the preponderance of their influence would soon manifest itself, not only in the politics of Turkey, but in the aggressions that would be committed upon us by the Barbary Powers. Difficulty would no doubt be encountered in supplying so large a fleet with stores at Toulon, but at present they are accustomed to overcome difficulties in France.

My humble opinion therefore is, my lord, that the most effectual measures should be taken for preventing the enemy's force, now supposed to be in the West Indies, from entering the Mediterranean, to which I consider it by far most likely that they will bend their course on their return; and this is only to be effected by stationing a chosen and well appointed fleet of equal force to meet them on their approach to Cadiz, for it would answer both ends; and this fleet should be commanded by officers well acquainted with the coast without and within the Gut. To watch all their ports with a proportionate force is impossible; a selection must be made; and the only difficulty seems to be as to the station to be chosen, and the means for rendering the measure efficacious.

I must consider the station abovementioned as the most important. At that season of the year we could not be driven through the Straits; and should the enemy resort to Brest, L'Orient or Ferrol, there can be little apprehension of their ships being got into condition for active service, before our Cadiz squadron could be united to the Channel fleet, and till Lord Nelson's squadron follows them, if he has gone on in the pursuit. Should they get to one of the ports on the Atlantic we have them in some measure in check; but if we fatally find that such a force reaches the Mediterranean, the consequences are hardly to be calculated upon.

If a few ships only were sent off Cadiz in the meantime, and the Ferrol station was very considerably strengthened, it might even induce the enemy, who will have many vessels lying in wait for them to the westward with intelligence, to bend their course towards Cadiz or the Straits, even if it were not originally intended; and our Straits squadron might be suddenly and secretly—for all depends on this—made up from the Ferrol squadron, in full time to meet them unexpectedly on their return, before they could possibly be apprised of its being there. As the enemy will probably have many cruisers off the Western Islands and well to the northward of them, to communicate with their fleet, it would seem important that we should have very many also, for the double purpose of intercepting their look-out vessels, and bringing information to our own fleets off Brest and Cadiz. I think it probable that the enemy's ships will return to Europe towards the end of July. Some plan of this kind, my lord, conducted with profound secrecy and discretion, might indemnify the nation for the mischief the enemy may have

done, and redound highly to the honour of your lordship's administration.

NAUTICUS.

P.S.—The unaccountable report made by the Wasp has occasioned the detention of this till this day—31st May.

London. 1st June, 1805.

My Lord,—If credit is to be given to public report we have the prospect of very soon seeing a great number of very fine ships in readiness for active service, provided men can only be procured. I am sensible that this object must greatly interest and distract your attention, in consequence of the multiplied difficulties which its accomplishment presents ; but as it seems indispensably necessary for the safety of the country that men are brought forward, by some means or other, I very respectfully submit to your lordship's consideration the propriety of—

1st. Establishing every ship's complement of marines at one-fourth of her whole complement. They would not only stand instead of landsmen for most of the ordinary duties, but, with the officers of the ship, would form the strongest possible barrier against internal irregularity.

The real seamen in a great proportion of the ships of the line and frigates now in commission are sufficient for two ships of their class.

2nd. Giving all possible encouragement to the levy of marines, and removing every degree of restriction as to locality of any recruiting, if any now exists.

3dly. Getting the immediate authority of parliament for raising at least 30,000 seamen and landsmen by quota in the parishes.

If such a number of men cannot be brought forward for the naval service before the commencement of winter—and not a day is to be lost in taking some energetic step—we shall have a dreary prospect before us ; because there is every reason to believe that we shall continue to be miserably harassed by the enemy's predatory excursions, particularly if he is enabled to bring back his squadrons now detached, in safety ; which God forbid.

NAUTICUS.

London. 10th June, 1805.

My Lord,—Your lordship may consider me a troublesome correspondent, but I am impelled by a sense of public duty to contribute my mite ; and I think it may not be unacceptable to you to see the annexed extract of a letter which I wrote to Lord Melville on the 20th March last. The safe return of the Rochefort squadron after disembarking their troops, you will observe, not only confirms my suggestion of their probable intentions, but more and more urges the necessity of keeping a respectable squadron in the vicinity of Cape Finisterre to check the enemy's predatory excursions whether outward or homeward bound. The Toulon and Cadiz squadrons will soon be back upon us also ; and most probably, as I have already said, into the Straits. We have plenty ships to watch, my lord, in every direction, and plenty seamen to render them effective. The government ought, without one week's delay, to call forth a sufficient supply of other hands ; the most energetic measures should be taken ; for their embarrassment will be extreme if this combined squadron gets safely back. I think it very probable that the Rochefort squadron will soon attempt another

sortie, and most likely either for Newfoundland, or to lie in wait for a homeward bound convoy.

NAUTICUS.

ENCLOSURE

*Extract of a letter from Nauticus to Lord Melville,
dated March 20, 1805*

I farther humbly think, my lord, that a far better field [than the coast of Ireland] for the employment of any detachment that can consistently be spared from the Channel fleet, would be off Cape Finisterre. The experience of the whole of last war, and that of this so far as it has gone, most incontrovertibly proves that no dependence can be placed on intercepting the enemy's squadrons on their first departure from Brest, L'Orient or Rochefort ; but if, in addition to the exertions of the Channel fleet, a select squadron of six or eight of our fastest sailing ships of the line, accompanied by some frigates, was kept as much as possible stationed at a reasonable distance off Cape Finisterre, there would not only be a great probability of their meeting with the enemy's future detachments from Brest, &c., destined to act against our Colonies, but also of their intercepting such detachments on their return, as well as the Spanish treasureships and ships of war bound to all the ports within the Bay. Is it not very probable that they would have done so in the cases of the Brest squadron in November, 1793 ; of Richery's in 1796 ; of the French squadron at Ferrol, and of the Rochefort squadron the other day ? Should the enemy even attempt to push their Brest fleet to Cadiz, as they did last war, to unite it to that of Spain, might not such a detachment of fast sailing ships stationed off Finisterre precede it, even in

view, and form a junction with our ships off Cadiz before the French got up? Had such been the case when Lord St. Vincent's small squadron was threatened by Brieux's fleet off Cadiz, in May 1799, our fleet would have been rendered so superior as to have been able advantageously to force the enemy to combat before he could have entered the Straits, or have followed and discomfited him before he could have reached a port within them. On this subject I speak from personal knowledge; the *Success* frigate and Childers sloop preceded that fleet all the way from the coast of Portugal, and gave information of its approach; would not some fast sailing large ships have done the same? I am not to expect, my lord, that you will hastily adopt the suggestions of an anonymous correspondent, but I hope that you will not think them unworthy of your consideration. The enemy's ports may be blockaded for ever (and it is indispensable perhaps that it should be done) without our being fortunate enough to fall upon anything coming out of them except it were a very large fleet: but in returning from abroad all their squadrons, as well as single ships, whether bound to Ferrol, Rochefort, L'Orient or Brest, must make some land in the neighbourhood of Finisterre. It is far from being improbable that the Rochefort squadron is gone chiefly for the purpose of debarking a body of troops, and may be at this moment on its return.

Nauticus to Lord Barham

London. 6th July, 1805.

My Lord,—The known arrival of the combined squadrons at Martinique leads me to trespass for another moment on your lordship's patience, induced thereto by no motive whatever but regard for the public good.

Referring to my former letters to your lordship, particularly that of the 16th of May last, I take the liberty of making the following suggestions: The entry of the enemy's fleet into Martinique proves, almost to a demonstration, that St. Domingo is not their ultimate object, which must now be considered to be confined to the seizure of some of our leeward settlements or an attack upon Jamaica—but the latter the most probable; and, unless the arrival of Lord Nelson in the West Indies before they proceed upon their operations at all, or his overtaking them before they quit the coast of Jamaica, if they go there, prevents them, they will, as I have already ventured to predict, be immediately back upon us, although reduced in number by the previous return of the Rochefort ships.

We can only appoint three squadrons of adequate force to intercept them; and I crave your lordship's pardon for humbly hazarding an opinion on the expediency of the stations; which is offered with all deference to better judgment.

1. One squadron of 14 sail of the line off Cadiz would shut them out from that port and the Straits; but it is highly important that the officer in charge of it should be intimately acquainted with the coast, both without and within the Gut.

2. The Ferrol squadron made up to another 14 ships of the line, and stationed from 30 to 40 leagues to the southward and westward of Cape Finisterre, would be in readiness to intercept them on their approach to Vigo, Ferrol or even Rochefort.

3. The Channel fleet stationed 40 leagues to the south-westward of Brest would be in a position to prevent their approach to that harbour, and be

at hand to intercept them if they should push for L'Orient ; as well as to cut off the Ferrol squadron should it venture to run for Brest.

Each of these fleets should have as many lookout vessels as possible, stationed at the distance of from 50 to 100 leagues to the southward and westward of them, for the purpose of giving the earliest information to any of our squadrons of the enemy's appearance and course, and the fleets should maintain their allotted positions as closely as possible for securing the reception of the cruiser's intelligence. If they chase on receiving such intelligence, a small vessel, or more, should be left on the station to direct towards the fleet any other vessel appearing with later reports.

If these, or similar measures, are taken, my lord, and the enemy get away from the West Indies without disaster, which I confidently hope may not be the case, they can hardly escape us at all points, and the removal of our Brest and Ferrol fleets from their ordinary ground would be but for a few weeks. But there is one great danger ; and that is that the enemy may push direct for Lisbon. The Portuguese dare not refuse letting them in ; and it will be remembered that when Sir James Craig's expedition was there, the French ambassador claimed similar privilege in case of need. I mention this circumstance only because they have, in many cases in other countries, laid foundations for claims in anticipation of measures quite unthought of at the moment by any but themselves. The squadron off Finisterre would not be very far from their track ; but I think it is of great importance to devise some extraordinary means for depriving them of the advantage of pilotage and entry into the Tagus, if they should try to go there.

I continue persuaded, my lord, that they will push for Cadiz or the Straits ; and it is far from unlikely that if any disappointment arises from the departure of the Rochefort ships, or extensive sickness, that they may immediately return, without striking a blow ; consequently not an hour is to be lost in looking out for them.

NAUTICUS.

London. 19th August, 1805.

My Lord,—Whether I am to impute the arrangements which I observed to be made for the interception of the enemy's homeward fleets, immediately after the date of my letter to you of the 6th, to the suggestions which I presumed to offer, or only to a partial coincidence of opinion, I am of course unable to tell ; your lordship only knows. But, my lord, I cannot fail deeply to lament that my ideas were not fully acted upon. If they had, this combined fleet must have been destroyed. Had Sir Robert Calder maintained his station with his 14 sail of the line, and Admiral Cornwallis remained upon the southern and western station which he was directed to take, the Rochefort reinforcement must have fallen into the hands of one or other of them ; for it was repeatedly seen in both their tracks, and there is every probability that the combined fleet would have been met with again. But by the precipitate detachment of Admiral Stirling, Sir Robert Calder was rendered unable to contend with 18 sail of the line if he had met them ; and by the unaccountable recall of Admiral Cornwallis, Rochefort and L'Orient were left perfectly open to the combined fleet, if it had pushed for either of these ports. Had they gone for Rochefort after Admiral Stirling was detached, he must have been sacrificed.

These stations, my lord, should have been maintained for a few weeks, as I suggested, till the enemy had been defeated, or till it was satisfactorily known that they had reached a port.

In like manner, Lord Nelson's squadron should have been kept with Admiral Collingwood's off Cadiz till the enemy's arrival or defeat was known ; because, if it be correctly stated in the public prints, he is on his way home, and Admiral Collingwood would have been exposed to similar danger with Admiral Stirling off Rochefort, if the enemy had attempted Cadiz or the Straits. These are facts, my lord, that appear incontrovertible. What is now to be done, my lord, requires deep consideration, and one of the first objects of regret must be that effectual measures were not taken while parliament was sitting, to secure the services of a large body of men ; for it is evident that ordinary means will not man the number of ships that must be kept in commission, if the maritime superiority of the country is to be preserved.

NAUTICUS.

London. 13th January, 1806.

My Lord,—If the squadron of which Sir John Duckworth has got sight is bound to the West Indies, pardon me for saying that I think their destination has been originally intended direct to surprise Antigua. The sight of their pursuers may probably dictate the necessity of securing themselves, in the first instance, in Martinique ; but if it be known in France, my lord, that this squadron has been got sight of and is pursued, before the late Rochefort squadron again puts to sea, I think it most probable that the latter, even if it was not previously intended, will be

immediately detached in support of the first. It is important, my lord, to weigh this well.

Here, my lord, the bottle project suggested to you in my letter of the 6th instant, might have been used with important effect by a fast sailing frigate advanced to denote whether the enemy steered to the Cape Verd Islands or direct for the Caribbees. But I beg to withdraw, on reconsideration, that part of the idea respecting attaching pieces of hide to the bottles in these latitudes, for it might occasion the bottles being drawn under water by sharks, &c. deep enough to force in the corks.

Your Lordship's . . .
NAUTICUS.

London. 10th June, 1807.

My Lord,—On the 6th July 1805, I took the liberty of writing to your lordship a letter, under my present signature, which I have rational grounds for believing induced you to make a particular disposition of the line of battleships employed in the Channel, &c., for intercepting, on their return, the enemy's ships that had been followed to the West Indies by Lord Nelson: and from such disposition it resulted that Sir Robert Calder, when reinforced by Rear-Admiral Stirling, was enabled to attack the combined fleet on its approach towards Ferrol. Unless that disposition had been made, the enemy must, at least, have entered Ferrol uninterrupted; perhaps they might have struck a serious blow against Sir Robert Calder's limited squadron on their way. In either case, your lordship can estimate, better than I, the disappointment that would have been experienced by the public. That the issue of the rencontre that did take place, after

the junction of Admiral Stirling's ships, was not more propitious, cannot be imputed to any want of efficiency in the disposition that was made.

On the 19th August following, I addressed another letter to your lordship, explanatory and expostulatory, on the events that had taken place; and though honour and principle strictly forbid, my lord, that I should unworthily retract what I conscientiously consider the truths which it contained, I am ready to confess that it was deficient in courteous expression, which your lordship will only do me justice in believing arose from the disappointment and mortification experienced by me, on the occasion of the unimproved result of an affair, to which I fancied that my humble suggestions had not a little contributed.

The first letter, from its date down to the present day, has never been seen by more than three of my confidential friends; the last has never been seen but by one; both the one and the other were dictated by considerations of public interest, without having any other object whatever in view. Should your lordship think that the writer of these letters has the least claim upon your consideration, and be of opinion that the merits of the first has atoned, in anticipation, for the apparent, but really unintentional uncourteousness of the last, an occasion exists wherein your lordship may render him a service of considerable importance at the present moment, without injury, and he is persuaded without inconvenience to yourself. If your lordship, therefore, has any favourable disposition towards me, as the author of these communications, I will have the honour of waiting upon you, with necessary explanations, at any time your lordship may appoint by a note addressed to me, under cover to J. Campbell,

Esq., No. 6, Sloane Street; but should your lordship have no such inclination towards me, I pray that you may not put yourself to the inconvenience of making any reply, and no farther trouble shall be given to your lordship on this subject by

NAUTICUS.

Nicholas Brown to Lord Barham

87, High Street, Marylebone. 14th June, 1807.

My Lord,¹—I have received from my friend, Mr. Campbell of Sloane Street, the letter, intended for me, which your lordship addressed to him on the 12th instant; and as I am encouraged by its contents to hope that your lordship will not be disinclined to honour me with your powerful assistance towards the attainment of an object of which I am at present in pursuit, I have no hesitation in announcing myself as the writer of several well intended communications, under the signature of Nauticus, addressed to your lordship, and others of his Majesty's ministers, at different periods of the present war. I shall detain your lordship with my explanations as little as possible.

I have served, my lord, in the navy, from the year 1780, till the 22nd of last month; eighteen years of which as a purser; and nearly the last eight as secretary to Lord Keith. The circumstances which have occasioned his lordship's present retirement from public service, and, I apprehend, the non-existence of any political connection between his family and his Majesty's present

¹ This, which may be presumed to be a holograph, is written in an ordinary office hand, quite different from the letters signed 'Nauticus,' which are in a backhand writing.

ministers, prevent me from receiving, through him, the assistance that is necessary for the accomplishment of my object—which is an appointment at the victualling board, if certain rumoured arrangements should take place in that department, on the delivery of the report respecting it, which is now understood to be preparing by the board at which your lordship presides. I am aware, my lord, of the delicacy of anticipations on subjects of such a nature, which may often be founded on bare suspicion, or at least be but imperfectly known. My only apology is the danger which frequently arises, in such cases, from delay.

I now trust to be forgiven for taking the liberty of explaining to your lordship that, although I have no reason to believe that Lord Keith has solicited such an appointment for me from Lord Mulgrave, I know that he has very strongly recommended me, by letter, to him, as a person well qualified to fill it; that a nobleman, to whom I have the honour to be known, who is on terms of strict personal, as well as political friendship with Lord Mulgrave, either already has, or will soon mention my name to his lordship in very favourable terms; that I am personally known to Sir Richard Bickerton, and to Captain Hope, to both of whom I have made my wishes known, and who have very kindly promised to use what influence they can in my behalf, when the proper opportunity for so doing may offer; and that my particular friend, Captain Searle of the victualling board, has very strongly recommended me to Admiral Gambier.

Now, my lord, as I am well aware of the high consideration which is given to your opinions on all subjects connected with the naval departments,

and impressed with a strong conviction that your lordship's recommendation, in the present particular instance (if any vacancy should take place) would most essentially promote the accomplishment of my wishes, I venture on the liberty of requesting the honour of your recommendation to Lord Mulgrave, and also the very material favour of your lordship's influence with Admiral Gambier in my behalf. With this assistance I should entertain the most sanguine hopes of success.

I am sensible how many apologies are due by me for the liberty of this intrusive correspondence; but I shall hope that if your lordship cannot oblige me by complying with my solicitation, that you will be pleased to forgive the trouble which it has occasioned to you.

I have the honour . . .

NICH^s. BROWN.

Lord Barham to Nauticus

[Autograph draft.]

19th June, 1807.

Sir,—It is not in contemplation to make any addition at present to the number of commissioners at the victualling board; and if it had been otherwise, I am naturally bound to recommend a gentleman whose claims, public as well as private, must precede every other consideration. I am, however, bound to repeat what I mentioned in my former letter, the estimation in which I hold your different communications under the signature of Nauticus, and shall be ready to do so on any occasion that may offer for your advantage.

I am . . .

ANONYMOUS TO LORD BARHAM

Plymouth. 4th September, 1805.

My Lord,—Permit me to invoke your most serious attention to the present critical situation of the Channel fleet, our great national defence. I allude particularly to the recent gallant, but desperate attempt at the mouth of Brest harbour. Had the enemy been aware of the extent of our enterprise, they might by throwing troops on board during the night and waiting quietly for the assault, probably have succeeded in the contest. The French, my lord, are a politic and crafty people ; and it seems by no means unlikely, that if the admiralty do not interfere, will hold out ere long such a bait for the unsuspecting heroism of Cornwallis, as may involve him and his followers in destruction. Your lordship best knows whether these remarks are dictated by timidity or

CAUTION.

ANONYMOUS TO LORD BARHAM

Bedford Square. 27th December, 1805.

My Lord,—A gentleman asserted yesterday in a large company that he heard you say, at a dinner party near a month ago, you knew there were eleven sail of men of war at Brest, with troops on board, quite ready to proceed, the first opportunity, for the East or West Indies. If this be true, and there is no reason to doubt the veracity of a gentleman of so much respectability, either your lordship or Admiral Cornwallis have kept a very bad look out, and been very negligent of your duty. If the former, your lordship should be

displaced ; if the latter, he ought no longer to have the command of the Channel fleet. It is indeed pretty generally believed he is now very unfit for that important station ; that your lordship is sensible of this, and wish him to resign, but are afraid to turn him out ! Can this be possible ? Are you afraid of doing your duty to your country, my lord, which has placed you in so important and exalted a station ? I hope that you are not. And of what should you be afraid ? The Cornwallis family have but little parliamentary interest, not more than two or three votes in the House at most ; then why be afraid of them ? Do your duty, my lord, to your country, and it will support you ; and if you mean to do that, you will immediately appoint a younger and more active commander to the command of the fleet ; the navy will be ruined if you do not, and that immediately.

I am . . .

A TRUE BRITON.

And the Rochefort squadron too, returning safe, with the Calcutta, into Ferrol ! Good God, my lord, why did you not watch and intercept them ? I suppose because they have kept out so long you had quite forgot them, or dreamt they had long since got safe into port ! And the poor Cork convoy—but that's nothing !!! Yet some partial friends will say your lordship keeps a good look out !

CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO THE
COMMAND AT CORK

Admiral Lord Gardner to Lord Barham

[Holograph.] Torquay, Newton Abbot. 19th August, 1805.

My dear Lord,—I have great pleasure in acquainting your lordship that my health is very much improved by the relaxation and indulgence which has been granted to me since I struck my flag on board the *Hibernia*¹; and as the *Topaze*, one of the Irish squadron, is now at Plymouth and may be expected to be ready to return to Cork in about three weeks' time, and Captain Lake having informed me that he has received orders, so soon as his ship is refitted and ready for sea, to continue to follow my orders for his further proceedings, I purpose, with your lordship's approbation, to return to Cork with Captain Lake (with whom I came over from Ireland in March last).

I therefore beg to know from your lordship if I may make my arrangements accordingly, in which case I shall remove my family from hence to Plymouth the latter end of this month; and I shall be obliged to your lordship to acquaint me if it is intended that Rear-Admiral Drury should remain upon the Irish station.

I have the honour to remain, my dear Lord,
Your most obedient and faithful
humble servant,

GARDNER.

¹ See *post*, p. 254.

Lord Barham to Lord Gardner

[Autograph; press copy.] Admiralty. 21st August, 1805.

My dear Lord,—I have just received yours and am very glad that your relaxation from business has had the desired effect. If you have not already acquainted the board with your intention of returning in the *Topaze*, it had better be done and I will take care of the rest.

As the enemy are become very numerous in ships, and may probably think of employing squadrons at sea, I have for the time determined to have as many heavy frigates as we can spare under your direction, for the express purpose of cruising to the westward, not only for the annoyance of the enemy's cruisers, but for the protection of the homeward and outward bound convoys and also of the western coast when necessary. By these means much strength will be added to the convoys where they stand in need of them, and your lesser ships and vessels will be at liberty to scour the St. George's Channel and grant such convoys as you are in the practice of doing at present. Rear-Admiral Drury will of course be superseded when your lordship assumes the command.

I remain, my dear Lord,

Yours very sincerely,

BARHAM.

Lord Gardner to Lord Barham

[Holograph.] Torquay, Newton Abbot. 23rd August, 1805.

My dear Lord,—I had the honour of receiving your letter this morning, and by this post I have wrote to Mr. Marsden to signify to the board my

intention of returning to Ireland in the *Topaze*, should it meet with your lordship's approbation.

Your lordship's determination (under the present circumstances of the increased number of the enemy's ships) of placing some heavy frigates under my direction on the Irish station, will, I trust, be attended with great service and benefit to the public, in protecting the homeward and outward bound convoys, and annoyance of the enemy's privateers and cruisers; and your lordship may depend upon my making such a disposition and arrangement of the force you may think proper to place under my orders, as may according to my judgment best answer your lordship's intentions—the protection of the trade of his Majesty's subjects.

By a letter I have lately received from Captain Bedford, I understand Vice-Admiral Douglas is desirous of having Captain John Douglas with him; and as Captain Bedford is willing to make way for him, will your lordship allow me to recommend Captain Bedford to your lordship's notice for the command of a good frigate. He has served with me many years, and wishes to follow my fortunes; and if your lordship will have the goodness, when a proper opportunity offers, to appoint him to a ship on the Irish station, I shall consider myself very much obliged.

As I am about to return to Ireland, I beg to add that nothing would please the merchants and people of Cork so much as to have a two-decked ship in their harbour; and if your lordship would appoint some old ship to lay there, as the *Lennox* did in the last war, I am certain it would gratify the people of that country exceedingly, and as a floating battery for the defence of the harbour, I think I should be able to man her in a short time; she would likewise be very useful as a receiving

ship and occasionally to receive prisoners (there being no depot in Ireland), until an opportunity offered of sending them to England.

I remain with great regard and esteem, my dear Lord . . .

The Trent, as an hospital ship, is not calculated to receive new raised men ; and I confess I should wish some other ship was appropriated for the admiral's flag.

Rear-Admiral W. O'B. Drury to Lord Barham

Trent: Cork Harbour. 23rd August.

My Lord,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your lordship's letter of the 16th, directing me to stop the sailing of the *Terrible*, *Raisnable*, *Diadem*, *Bellicieux* and *Diomede* till further orders, and to instruct their captains to have their ships ready for sailing at a moment's notice ; and should I, by any well-grounded information, be assured that the enemy are masters of the Channel, and that Admiral Cornwallis was obliged to quit his station off Ushant—in such case, to send them immediately to Plymouth. I beg leave to acquaint your lordship neither the *Raisnable* nor *Diomede* are yet arrived ; and having received information of my Lord Nelson's arrival at Spithead, I return the letters addressed to his lordship.

The only vessel I have at present in port is the *Espiègle*, which I shall direct to look out for the homeward bound East India fleet, and shall charge her captain with orders for any of the ships under my command which she may fall in with, to do the same and to execute their lordships' orders, a copy of which I shall direct the captain of the

Espiègle to shew to any of his Majesty's ships she may meet, as their commanders will thereby be able to judge how far they can, consistently with the orders they may be in the execution of, meet their lordships' intentions in regard to the East India convoy.

I have the honour to be . . .

Lord Gardner to Lord Barham

[Holograph.] Torquay, Newton Abbot. 4th September, 1805.

My dear Lord,—By a letter I received this morning from Vice-Admiral Young at Plymouth, he acquaints me the builder reports that the *Topaze* will probably be finished in about a week, but he does not speak with certainty. I therefore purpose going to Plymouth on Tuesday next, to be in readiness to embark for Ireland; but, as I understand the *Euryalus*, one of the Irish squadron, is arrived with dispatches respecting the combined fleet having got into Cadiz—which at this moment must be a great relief to your lordship's mind, and ensure I hope the safety of the homeward bound convoys—if it should meet your lordship's approbation, I could return to Cork in the *Euryalus*, Captain Blackwood having offered his service to carry me over.

I am much obliged to your lordship for your letter respecting Captain Bedford, and should your lordship, on further consideration, think it an advisable measure to appropriate a two-decked ship for the defence of Cork harbour, and for the reception of the commanding officer's flag and receiving ship, such a ship would give a degree of consequence to the harbour and would be gratifying to the city of Cork.

III.

P

Additional Instructions for Lord Gardner, Commanding-in-Chief at Cork and on the Coast of Ireland.

[Draft.]

September, 1805.

Whereas it is of the utmost consequence that a direct line of communication should be established between Cape Clear and the coasts of Spain and Portugal as far as Cape St. Vincent, and it has been deemed advisable for this purpose to send a small squadron to cruise between Cape Finisterre and Cape St. Vincent, under the orders of Captain Lobb of La Pomone :

We herewith send you a copy of the orders given to that officer for your information ; and as it is intended to continue the line of communication from Cape Finisterre (where one of the frigates belonging to the Western squadron will always be stationed) to Cape Clear, you are hereby required and directed to make the following arrangement of the ships and vessels under your orders for this purpose, notwithstanding any former orders to the contrary.

[Draft.]

[? September.]

Notwithstanding, and in addition to former orders, you are hereby required and directed to take the ships and vessels named in the margin ¹ under your command. And whereas it is proper to keep up as direct a communication as possible with other stations, you are to order your frigates to cruise in a line between Cape Clear and Cape Finisterre, where one of those belonging to the Western squadron will always be stationed. As this line is considered as a proper one for the protection of our own trade and the annoyance of the enemy, the ships cruising on it are to pay particular attention to those objects. With regard

¹ Not named in the draft.

to your smaller cruisers, you will employ them in protecting the coasting trade, in guarding St. George's Channel, and in affording convoys to the trade bound to and from England; and as soon as a greater number of ships can be added to those now put under your command, you will direct them to cruise as far to the westward as you find it necessary for following the enemy's cruisers and privateers. [You are] to station the different frigates and vessels mentioned in the margin¹ (whose commanders have been or are directed to put themselves under your orders), in the best manner possible for rendering the line of communication between Cape Clear and Cape Finisterre complete, as well as for the protection of the trade and annoyance of the enemy.

You are to give to each captain or commander of the vessels to be employed in this service the necessary directions for cruising as near as possible or as circumstances will permit to a given latitude and longitude, for the purpose of filling up this line—and one of which, a frigate, must be at latitude 49°, longitude [*blank*]. Between this frigate and the fleet off Ushant, the commander-in-chief of that fleet will be directed to establish a direct line of communication by means of intermediate ships and vessels; and will have similar orders to your lordship for using every means in your² power to render this measure effective.

Your lordship is further directed to order the commanders of the ships or vessels falling in with or discovering any fleet or strong squadron of the enemy, on no account to quit them, for the purpose of giving information, until he has followed them so far as to be sure of their destination, when he is to make the best of his way with

¹ Not mentioned in the draft.

² So in draft. Clearly 'his' is meant.

the view of communicating this intelligence to the fleet or squadron of his Majesty in that quarter where, in his judgment, it may be most material that the intelligence should be communicated.

Lord Gardner to Lord Barham

[*Holograph.*]

Cove. 21st October, 1805.

My dear Lord,—Since my appointment to the command of his Majesty's ships employed on the coast of Ireland, I have very maturely considered the great inconvenience which arises from the circumstance of the naval stores being kept at Kinsale, a distance of five leagues from this harbour. The delay, expense and difficulty of getting the stores round to this harbour (unless when the wind is favourable) is very great; with easterly and southerly winds is very frequently impossible, and ships have been often detained in port for want of their stores. I have, therefore, thought at different times, it my duty, both publicly and privately to represent the great inconvenience and frequent delays which the separation of the naval and ordnance stores from the ships refitting occasions, and have pointed out to Lord St. Vincent, to Lord Melville and to Sir Andrew Hamond and the navy board, how very much the public service would be benefited (in my opinion) by removing the naval and ordnance stores from Kinsale to this harbour.

Lord St. Vincent was of the same opinion, but during the time he was at the admiralty, no steps were taken in the business. I was more successful in my representations to Lord Melville and to Sir John Colpoys (one of the board of admiralty at that time); and after several communications which his lordship had with Lord Chatham, the

master general, on the subject of Haulbowline Island (which belongs to the Ordnance department) and which was considered by me and Lieut.-Col. Sir Charles Holloway, the chief engineer here, as the most eligible place for a naval depôt, Mr. Peake, from the inspector-general's office, was sent over, seven or eight months ago, to examine and report his opinion of Haulbowline Island and what the ground was capable of.

His report was sent to England a few weeks previous to my being ordered to join the Channel fleet in March last, with a survey, plan and drawing of the buildings which he (Mr. Peake) supposed would be necessary, which I conclude have been sent to the admiralty for the consideration of their lordships; but as nothing further has been done in the business, I beg leave to request your lordship's attention to the subject, convinced that you are well aware of the objections I have stated to the naval stores being deposited at Kinsale, while his Majesty's ships must refit in the harbour of Cork.

The subject is of that importance to the public service that I am led to believe your lordship will not delay taking it into consideration, and if I shall not be thought troublesome, I would transmit to you copies of the letters which have passed between me and the navy board, &c., &c., on the subject; and in order that your lordship may form some judgment of the present state of the naval store houses at Kinsale, I am to request you will call for a report of a survey on them, taken by my directions, in the month of May 18—, by Mr. John Urquhart, surveying master here.

I have the honour to be . . .

Minuted by Barham.—To enquire into the state of this business, that it may be followed up.

LORD BARHAM TO LORD GARDNER

[*Autograph; press copy.*] Admiralty. 4th November, 1805.

My dear Lord,—I deferred answering your lordship's letter of the 21st of last month relative to Haulbowline Island, till I had traced the business from the time when I began it in 1795 to the present moment. I saw the necessity of the measure at that time and sent Captain Schank over with a surveyor—Mr. Cockerel—to form plans and estimates, which was done to an amount of £19,000. How it came to be dropped afterwards I cannot say, but the subject is of such importance in a naval point of view, that I have directed its being taken up from where it was left off, by General Bentham and carried into immediate execution.

I am, my dear Lord,

Sincerely yours,

BARHAM.

[*Holograph.*¹]

Admiralty. 22nd November, 1805.

My dear Lord,—I have strong apprehensions that the two frigates which have escaped us from Flushing have some view against us; and when I consider the season of the year and the length of the time for which they are victualled, I think no plan more likely than an attack on our African settlements and trade. I must therefore desire your lordship will, as soon as you are able, dispatch two heavy frigates and a brig or sloop to the island of Goree on the coast of Africa; and if they find that island in a state of security, to pursue such further measures as the commanding officer may

¹ This is the actual letter, returned by Gardner. See *post*, p. 220.

think proper to adopt, from the intelligence he may receive at that island, for the protection of the trade and settlement. Should no information be received of the enemy having a force on the coast, nor any preparations making at Senegal for attacking our possessions, he is to cruise for a fortnight or three weeks off that port and then return to Goree, and follow such intelligence as he may receive at that island. But if no information can be procured there of these frigates, he is to run down the coast and call at Sierra Leone; and finding everything there in a state of safety, to complete his water and go down the coast or otherwise as he may, from intelligence, see proper; and either return to Cork from Sierra Leone or from any other part of the coast, as may best suit the service he is upon.

In passing the Cape Verd islands to send the brig into Port Praya for information; but on no account to suffer any one to land from the brig but an officer, and the frigates to be kept out of sight of the harbour till she returns. The senior captain's orders to be sealed and not opened till he has been 24 hours at sea.

Whatever relates to this service to be directed to me as private, until your lordship receives a confirmation of these orders from the board. The vessels employed to be mentioned in your disposition of ships as 'cruising to the westward.'

I am, my dear Lord,
Very faithfully yours,

BARHAM.

Minuted by Gardner: Received by post, 29th November, 1805.

Lord Gardner to Lord Barham

[Holograph.]

Cove. 22nd November, 1805.

My dear Lord,—I was honoured with your letter of the 16th instant this morning, acquainting me of two French frigates having escaped from Flushing, and it is believed are gone north about ; expressing a wish that I would send two frigates off Cape Finisterre in order to endeavour to intercept them. The Loire is the only frigate under my orders at present in port, and I shall send her to sea, with directions to Captain Maitland, on his meeting with any one of the frigates under my orders whose captain is junior to him, to take her under his command and to cruise off Cape Finisterre for the purpose of intercepting the above two frigates of the enemy ; and in the event of his falling in with any of the frigates whose captains are senior to Captain Fred. Maitland, to put himself under the command of the first he shall cross upon, and to acquaint her captain that it is my directions that he cruises under the orders which I shall give Captain Fred. Maitland.

I was made very happy on the receipt of your lordship's letter in answer to mine respecting the removal of the naval stores from Kinsale to this harbour, and I am much gratified to be informed that your lordship intends giving orders for the business which was begun by Mr. Peake some months ago, to be taken up where it was left off.

As the Rosario, one of the sloops lately on this station, has been paid off, I am to request your lordship will order one or two other sloops (if you can spare them) to be placed under my orders.

The demand for convoys from hence, Dublin, Belfast, &c., are so frequent, that I have not sloop sufficient for this service; and I am of opinion that an armed ship of some kind should be stationed at Lough Swilly, and if your lordship should be of that opinion, I am persuaded you will order one for that service.

I have the honour to be, my dear Lord . . .

J. D. Thomson to Lord Gardner

Admiralty.

24th November, Sunday, 2 o'clock P.M.

[Autograph; rough copy.]

My Lord,—Being acquainted with the nature of the secret order sent to your lordship by Friday's post, and Lord Barham having gone to his seat in Kent last night, not to return till to-morrow, I judge it expedient to forward this to your lordship by express, in order to acquaint you that information has just been received from Lord Keith that the two French frigates alluded to in the secret order are returned to Flushing, which will supersede the necessity of carrying the said order into execution. I annex a copy of a paragraph from Lord Keith's letter to Lord Barham. Lord Barham will write to your lordship by to-morrow's mail.

I have the honour to be, &c., &c.

Lord Gardner to Lord Barham

[Holograph.] Brilliant: Cork Harbour. 26th November, 1805.

My Lord,—I had the honour of receiving your lordship's secret letter of the 19th instant this morning, directing me to take immediate measures for completing two of the heavy frigates and a

brig sloop for foreign service, and hold them in readiness for putting to sea at the shortest notice ; acquainting me that I shall receive the necessary official orders for the service in due time.

In answer thereto I am very sorry it is not in my power to comply immediately with your lordship's directions, as, by my last return of the disposition of the ships and vessels under my command, your lordship will perceive that all my frigates (with the exception of the *Brilliant*) are at sea, as are also the only two brig sloops I have, the *Rose* and the *Brisk* ; the former employed as convoy to *Portsmouth*, the latter to the *Downs*. The *Boadicea* and *Dryad* are the two first frigates that I expect in port, and so soon as they and one of the brig sloops arrive, I will order their commanders to complete for foreign service.

I have the honour to be, my Lord, . . .

In another letter, of the same date, he virtually repeats this and adds :—

In the event of Captain *Fred. Maitland* (who sailed from hence yesterday) meeting with any of my cruisers between *Cape Clear* and *Cape Finisterre*, he is directed to communicate my orders for two frigates to cruise together and to look out for the two French frigates which your lordship informed me lately sailed from *Flushing*, and I sincerely hope some of them will have the good fortune to fall in with them. The *Sybille* (which your lordship acquaints me is ordered to join me, north about) will be a great acquisition to my squadron, and should she arrive first, I shall order her to store and victual for foreign service.

Lord Gardner to J. D. Thomson

[Holograph.]

Cove. 26th November, 1805.

Sir,—I received this morning by express at about half past nine o'clock, your secret letter of the 24th instant, acquainting me that information had just then been received from Lord Keith, that the two French frigates alluded to in my Lord Barham's secret letter to me of the 19th instant, had returned to Flushing, which will supersede the necessity of carrying his lordship's directions into execution, annexing a copy of a paragraph in Lord Keith's letter to Lord Barham, and that I may expect, on his lordship's return to town, to hear from him on the subject.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,
GARDNER.

Lord Gardner to Lord Barham

[Holograph.]

Cove. 29th November, 1805.

My dear Lord,—I was this morning honoured with your lordship's most private letter of the 22nd instant, to the contents of which I should have paid every attention (so soon as two of my heavy frigates and a sloop had returned into port) had I not yesterday received a letter from your lordship's private secretary, Mr. Thomson, by express, dated the 24th instant, acquainting me, that information had just been received from Lord Keith, that the two French frigates alluded to in your lordship's secret letter of the 22nd instant, had returned to Flushing, which supersedes the necessity of carrying the same into execution; which otherwise I

should have done conformable to your lordship's instructions.

I have the honour to be with great regard, my dear Lord,

Your sincere and faithful servant,

GARDNER.

[Holograph.]

Cove. 5th December, 1805.

My dear Lord,—Your letter of the 25th ultimo I did not receive until this morning, confirming the account which I had previously received from Mr. Thomson, your lordship's private secretary, of the two French frigates which had sailed from Flushing having returned again to that port; and agreeable to your lordship's desire I herewith enclose the private instructions which you sent me on the 21st of last month. I have the honour to be with great regard and esteem, my dear Lord,

GARDNER.

Lord Barham to Lord (?) Gardner

[Signed; press copy.]

Admiralty. 30th December, 1805.

My dear Lord,—We have been so much baffled this summer in our conjectures concerning the Rochefort squadron that it becomes an object of consequence to endeavour to find out their haunts, if possible. I could therefore wish that your lordship would, in the compass of a cruise, send one of your frigates to the Western Islands to make particular enquiry as to the use which is made of these islands by the enemy and particularly this last year: if any or what squadrons or single ships have been there during the last years: how long they have remained and what refreshments they have procured. If this kind of information can be procured privately, it may prove of use

to us in the course of the war ; and as many things will occur on the spot which cannot be committed to writing, the person you send should be shrewd and intelligent. The ports they frequent, their manner of passing their time, whether open to attack and how : whether sickly or healthy or whatever else may occur. The sooner this is done the better as I apprehend the enemies' plan will be small squadrons to annoy and destroy our trade. Sir John B. Warren is ordered to the West to prevent mischief from the squadron that left Brest on the 14th. We are cramped at present from the many disabled ships that have unavoidably crowded our ports in consequence of our late victories.

I am, my dear Lord,

Sincerely yours,

BARHAM.

¹ In the case your cruisers should at any time reach Madeira, the consul there has received directions to collect all the information he can with regard to the enemy's squadrons, and as it is probable their frigates may cruise in pairs, it will be necessary to guard our single ships against their united force, and meet them on equal ground. The Rochefort squadron is returned to that port.

Lord Gardner to Lord Barham

[Holograph.]

Cove. 5th February, 1806.

My dear Lord,—I most sincerely lament the irreparable loss the country has sustained in the death of Mr. Pitt, and am sorry to learn from your lordship that his administration are retiring, and a

¹ The postscript is in Barham's hand.

new one forming under Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox. I hope and trust, with your lordship, it may be equal to our wants and the present critical situation of the empire. Everything having gone on so prosperously in the naval department, I think your lordship must inwardly rejoice at having so great a weight removed from off your shoulders. I am very glad to hear that the business respecting Haulbowline Island is finally settled in your administration, and that you have directed a copy of the boundaries, as given to you by Lord Chatham, to be transmitted to me; and that the navy board have been directed to carry the plan into execution.

The commanding officers within the Narrow Seas will be much gratified to hear your lordship means to promote their first lieutenants previous to your leaving the admiralty; and if your lordship promotes any persons to the rank of lieutenants, I beg leave to mention my nephew Sub-Lieutenant Thurston.

Sincerely wishing you a long continuance of health, I remain with great regard and esteem, your lordship's

Sincere and faithful servant,

GARDNER.

CAPTAIN J. L. GRANT'S NARRATIVE

Loss of the E. I. C. ship Brunswick: her captain's imprisonment on board the Marengo

In the *Naval Miscellany*, vol. i. (N.R.S., vol. xx.), p. 354 *seq.*, is given Mr. Thomas Addison's account of the capture of the Brunswick, East Indiaman, by the French ships Marengo (74) and Belle Poule (38), and of his subsequent detention on board the Marengo. We have here

the letter of the Brunswick's commander, Captain James Ludovic Grant, to the Secretary of the E.I.C.; his account, in full, of the capture and of his confinement on board the *Marengo*. Though somewhat fuller than Mr. Addison's—which seems to have been, in part at least, abstracted from it—it is unnecessary to print it here *in extenso*. Captain Grant dwells, with great bitterness, on the pressing of his men at Bombay (*Miscellany*, p. 353), as the principal cause of his capture. He says:—

To the very great superiority which the enemy's ships had in sailing, and to the deplorable weak state of my ship's company, which had been drained of almost every effective seaman by his Majesty's ships at Bombay, and was thereby rendered so completely inefficient as to take from me the means of resistance, and to deprive me of the only resource which then presented itself, I am chiefly to attribute this sad misfortune. To this last most afflicting cause, I was deprived of even a hope of support, and was therefore prevented from taking the chance of destroying the ship by running her on shore, in preference to my being reduced to the disgraceful necessity of resigning so valuable a command into the hands of the enemy.

And, reverting to the subject in his sustained narrative, he says:—

The Brunswick's ship's company did not possess twenty effective men, exclusive of the officers. Her guns on the gun-deck were wholly manned with Chinese, with the exception of one European to each; the upperdeck guns were manned by the remaining Europeans and Lascars, who were stationed for the general defence of the ship. The numbers were sufficient to work the ship, but not to defend her, and this was too

evident when we received the frigate's fire, many of the Chinese having quitted their guns, and the Lascars their stations on the quarter-deck; and when we returned our fire, I am ashamed to say that it served more to expose our weakness than to injure the enemy. I trust this fatal example will prove the absolute necessity that exists, that while the Hon. the Company's ships are armed, or supposed so to be, they should not be subjected to the privation of their best men, who are invariably taken from them at the first port at which they arrive in India.

Captain Grant clearly found comfort in the belief that if he had been permitted to retain his English sailors, the Brunswick would have been able to beat off the line of battle ship and frigate. He did not understand that, in reality, these men, by having been pressed, remained to be useful to the country, instead of becoming prisoners of war. It seems to mark how capable men deceived themselves as to the ability a merchant ship had to resist a man-of-war, and continued to deceive themselves, even after the capture of the Kent, Indiaman, by the *Confiance* privateer, 7th October, 1800, or the Warren Hastings, also Indiaman, by the *Piémontaise* frigate, 21st June, 1806.

While on board the *Marengo*, Grant was a witness—so far as was permitted—of the skirmish with the *Blenheim* and her convoy, and conceived—as might, perhaps, have been expected—that the French ships were repulsed by the Indiamen. His account, much fuller than Mr. Addison's (*Miscellany*, p. 361), has an exceptional interest.

August 7, 1805, in Lat. 20° 44' S, Long. 80° E, thick, hazy weather, with hard squalls from the SE, at 4 P.M., eleven sail were distinctly seen through the haze, from the *Marengo's* deck; they were standing to the N, and were certainly not more than 3 or 4 miles distant from us. The

Marengo was immediately wore,¹ followed by *La Belle Poule*; the *Brunswick* [prize] who was then in company, was directed by signal to keep her wind, which she immediately obeyed and was soon out of sight.¹ When the *Marengo's* sails were set, we were going at least 9 knots, and approached the fleet so fast that at 4.30 P.M. I plainly discovered that the fleet consisted of Indiamen under convoy of a man of war, but the weather was so extremely hazy that I could not possibly discover her force. At 5 P.M. we were not more than a mile from the body of the fleet, who appeared to be closing round the man of war. At this time I was ordered to quit the deck, and was sent below to the purser's cabin, under charge of the captain of arms. At 5.25 P.M. the firing commenced, and I was informed by the people who came below, that we passed so near the centre ships that they were afraid of getting on board of them. We continued firing at intervals till about 6.30 P.M., when I was informed that we had passed through the whole, and that we were to keep sight of them all night.

As all hostilities seemed to have ceased, I was anxious to get upon deck, but I was not permitted to come up from below till 7.30 P.M., when the admiral sent for me into his cabin. At this time we were steering NNE, with a great press of sail; *La Belle Poule* was close to us, on our larboard quarter, and the fleet, apparently in chase of us, about four miles distant astern. I counted them all distinctly from the stern gallery. The admiral informed me that he had passed through the fleet, and had given and received their fire; that it was

¹ The French ships, crossing the SE trade, on their way from Ceylon to the Cape, would be on the port tack. They therefore wore to the N, while the *Brunswick* continued on her southerly course.

his intention to keep them in sight all night and to attack them in the morning; but as he was certain that there was a line of battle ship in the fleet, he did not choose to risk the event of an action in the night. The people were all kept at their quarters and a strict look-out kept during the whole night. At daylight, the fleet were about five miles distant from us, upon our lee quarter. We immediately wore ship and stood towards them, followed by the frigate who kept close to us; but as soon as it was discovered that five of the largest ships were formed in line of battle, with the 74-gun ship in the rear, we wore again, hauled upon a wind on the starboard tack, and the frigate's signal being made to come within hail, it appeared, from what passed, that the admiral, as well as his captain and the captain of the frigate were of opinion that the fleet were of superior force, and that it would not be prudent to attack them; but in order to be more certain of their real force, we might approach them nearer than we then were. We accordingly bore up a second time, and having run down for about a quarter of an hour, we hauled our wind again, at about three miles' distance, where we continued the whole morning, with light winds and fine, clear weather, making and shortening sail occasionally till noon.

The fleet appeared to me to consist of five large Indiamen, which I concluded to be direct ships bound to China, and five smaller ships with troops, under convoy of a 74-gun ship. The whole conduct and appearance of the ships, who were formed in line, does them infinite credit, and was completely sufficient to prevent even the idea of an attack on board the *Marengo*¹ . . .

¹ This account, largely from the French point of view, can be compared with that given by James, *Naval History*, iv. 51-2.

Thus did this valuable convoy bid defiance to the *Marengo* and her consort; and I take the liberty of remarking that while the Hon. Company's ships are sufficiently manned, and have the support of one line of battle ship, there is little to be apprehended from the force that is at present under the command of Rear-Admiral Linois, who has often confessed to me that, not having any port open to him for resort to in case of an accident happening to his ships, and no possible means of replacing a mast, should he unfortunately lose one, he is under the absolute necessity of acting as a privateer, and that it is therefore equally impolitic for him to risk the chance of an action, even with an equal force.¹

As I have been two months at sea on board the *Marengo*, I have had full opportunity to confirm these ideas, and to judge of the internal state and condition of the ship.

[She carries 80 guns—36, 18 and 12 pounders, and including six 32-pr. brass carronades.]

She sails uncommonly fast; but her ship's company, though strong in number—there being 800 men now on board—does not possess 100 effective seamen, and is generally composed of a variety of characters of all nations, in which are included 200 Lascars and natives from the Isle of France. There does not appear to be the least order or discipline amongst the people; all are equal, and each man seems equally conscious of his own superiority; and such is the sad state and condition of the *Marengo*, that I may with safety affirm she floats upon the sea as a hulk of insubordination, filthiness and folly. (Cf. *Miscellany*, 359.)

¹ This ought to be remembered in Linois' defence when his conduct on this and other occasions is adversely criticised.

The *Belle Poule* mounted 44 guns, 18 and 12 prs., sailed as well as the *Marengo*, and was apparently in better order. They were both very badly off for naval stores, particularly sails and cordage. They anchored in Simon's Bay on the 13th September, and Grant and his officers were landed on parole. He believed that Linois intended, after refitting, to cruise off the Cape for some time; he (Linois) had estimated the delay for refitting at three weeks, but Grant thought that it would take much longer. His account of the state of the Colony is curious.

The distressed state of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope—every individual being put to an allowance of bread—affords the admiral but little hopes of being able to victual his ships, either in so complete a manner or with such expedition as he at first expected; and in addition to the scarcity of provisions, particularly of flour, he soon discovered he had a much greater difficulty to encounter—the absolute want of credit. This want of confidence in the merchants seems to originate in the failure of the payment of his bills which he had drawn upon the French government upon a former occasion. To such an extent was this carried that, for the first three or four days, it seemed doubtful whether anybody would undertake to supply the ships with what they wanted, upon any terms; and Mr. Galliard, the accredited agent for the French empire, declared to me that, although he was regularly appointed by his government to reside at the Cape in such capacity, and authorized to supply the ships of his Imperial Majesty with whatever they might require, he was not in possession of one single dollar of the public money, nor had he the means of procuring either money or provisions for the squadron but upon the most exorbitant terms, every merchant at the

Cape being fully aware of the considerable risks there were that the admiral's bills would never be duly honoured.

From this disagreeable position Linois was relieved by what he would otherwise have considered a serious misfortune. The Brunswick, which had anchored in False Bay on the evening of the 18th September, was blown from her anchors early the next morning and driven on shore at the head of the bay, where she bilged and became a total wreck (*Miscellany*, 363). But while Grant was recording his satisfaction that the French would not possess ship or cargo, Linois could not help being secretly pleased at the solution of his difficulties. The provisions and stores of the Brunswick satisfied the immediate wants of his ships, and the sale of the wreck might be expected to bring in the necessary cash. It was advertised for sale, by public auction, where it lay, when Grant left the Cape on board the Danish merchant ship Dannebrog. The end did not come to the cruise of the Marengo and Belle Poule till after Barham had left the admiralty.

LETTERS, ORDERS AND MEMORANDA
RELATING TO THE COMMAND OFF
BREST

L.C.A. to Admiral Cornwallis

The following letters, here given from the official drafts or abstracts, are, to a great extent, complementary to those published in *The Blockade of Brest* (N.R.S., vols. xiv. and xxi.), which are, in many cases, the answers to or acknowledgments of these.

[*Abstract.*]

15th June, 1803.

[Not to send prizes into the ports of Portugal, except in cases of necessity.]

18th June, 1803.

[Not to take the boats of French or Dutch fishermen which are too small to transport troops, but detain only the stout able seamen.]

1st July, 1803.

[Respecting the release of unserviceable men and boys captured in French fishing vessels. Boats exceeding the size of a common Peter-boat¹ to be detained.]

24th July, 1803.

[To receive for H.M. service, such seamen as shall be delivered from the militia.]

¹ A type of fishing boat used in the Thames and Medway (see Smyth). It is long since extinct.

THE COMMAND OFF BREST 231

24th August, 1803.

[To seize or destroy ships and vessels belonging to the countries styling themselves the Italian and Ligurian Republics.]

6th September, 1803.

[To direct cruisers, in the event of their falling in with a Swedish ship under American colours, to detain her, in case any person be found on board her answering to the description of Jerome Bonaparte.]

12th September, 1803.

[Not to detain or molest any vessels belonging to States in amity with his Majesty, on account of their having on board wool, the growth of Spain, consigned to any merchant of the United Kingdom.]

27th September, 1803.

[Not to seize or detain any Spanish vessels trading between H.M. free ports in the West Indies, and furnished with licenses.]

5th January, 1804.

[To permit the San Joseph, Spanish frigate, to proceed on her voyage to the Havana, having on board physicians, &c., to introduce vaccine inoculation into the Spanish West Indies.]

20th February, 1804.

[In consequence of intelligence from France that the enemy's force is in readiness to invade H.M. dominions, to hold all the ships and officers in constant readiness for immediate service.]

29th February, 1804.

[To take measures for causing any letters addressed to Joseph Bacon, on board the Princess Royal, to be detained and forwarded to the admiralty.]

March, 1804.

[To order small cruisers to stand in close to the coast of France, to favour the escape of General Pichegru and Georges, or other persons lately escaped from Paris.]

26th April, 1804.

[The captains and surgeons of H.M. ships to take frequent opportunities for inspecting the treatment of such of their men as may be sent on shore sick.]

4th August, 1804.

[Particular Instructions, in case the enemy's fleet in the harbour of Brest should put to sea.]

[Draft.]

24th August, 1804.

From the Intelligence we have received, joined to some recent appearance of movements among the ships of the enemy's fleet in the harbour of Brest, there seems ground to suppose that they are disposed to take advantage of some favourable opportunity that may occur, to put to sea with some hostile purpose against the interests of this country ; and under these circumstances, we have thought it expedient to furnish you with Instructions, so far as circumstances admit of our forming any opinion upon the views which the enemy may have in contemplation.

If the enemy put to sea with the whole of their fleet, without any considerable body of troops on board, the probability is that they mean an

attempt on some part of the coast of Britain, and that the object of the fleet is to cover the disembarkation of some of the numerous assemblages of troops now collected in the ports opposite to the coast of England. This seems a very desperate attempt, and is likely to terminate in the destruction of their fleet, if they should be able, by any extraordinary unforeseen events, to elude your vigilance, and thereby to make their way up the Channel ; but if the existing government of France is determined to risk everything on this long menaced attempt against this country, we are not at liberty to calculate solely on what is rational or probable, but we must likewise keep in view such contingencies as may be barely possible, and such as passion and intemperance may give rise to. You are therefore hereby directed to continue to watch the motions of the enemy with the fleet under your command as closely as may be, consistently with the safety of the ships, and in case the enemy should put to sea in the manner before mentioned, you will exert your utmost endeavours, with the whole of your force, to take or destroy that of the enemy ; and with that view, you will not fail, by means of the frigates and small vessels attached to the fleet under your command, to collect such intelligence as may enable you to ascertain the real object which the enemy may have in view ; and by combining the accounts derived from the various channels of your intelligence, you will, we trust, be enabled to ascertain the real point of the enemy's ultimate destination, and will thereby not only be enabled to frustrate their attempts, but to take or destroy them.

If the enemy have determined on the attempt of an invasion from the ports within the Channel

under the cover and protection of the whole of their fleet, it is probable that they will endeavour to mislead you, by adopting, in their outset, a course different from their ultimate intention ; but by collecting and combining your intelligence in the manner already pointed out, we make no doubt you will be able to disappoint that intention, and to make effectual exertions for coming up with, and taking or destroying them.

If by stress of weather or any other circumstance, you should be driven off your station, and in your absence, the enemy should leave the port of Brest in their full force, without your having any early intelligence of the course they may have taken, it is, in such a case, impossible to lay down any precise direction for your conduct. You will then be under the necessity of exercising your judgment, and of regulating your proceedings according to the circumstances attendant on the movement of the enemy, the state of the weather, and an accurate combination of the intelligence you may be able to collect from your cruisers or otherwise.

If your intelligence should lead you to believe that the enemy have directed their course to England or Ireland, you will proceed off the Lizard, where you are likely to receive information whether they have passed up the Channel ; and if they have not, you will proceed to the coast of Ireland, and take your station off Cape Clear, or off such other point or place as, from the course of your intelligence, you may think most eligible. If, notwithstanding every endeavour you may use for the purpose, you cannot ascertain to your own satisfaction that the enemy's fleet have steered a course leading either to the coasts of England or Ireland, the most advisable thing you can do is to

remain some time at your rendezvous, or to return to your present station off Brest, until some accounts are received of the course of the enemy ; and if numerous small vessels are employed to cruise between Ushant and Cape Clear for this purpose, it is more than probable that intelligence would be very shortly received, if the enemy's course was shaped in the first instance for Ireland.

If either from your own observation, or from the intelligence you may receive, you are satisfied that only a part of the enemy's fleet has put to sea, and that the portion of the fleet so detached has carried with them a considerable body of troops, we think it most probable that in such a case the intentions of the enemy may be directed against the coast of Ireland ; but it is immaterial, as to any line of conduct you are to pursue, whether the armament is directed against Ireland or a part of the coast of Britain ; for, in either case, the directions we have already given are applicable, with the difference only, that, in this last case, you detach an adequate part of your force after the enemy, instead of pursuing with your whole fleet.

If the enemy shall proceed to sea with a detachment of their fleet, without any considerable body of troops on board or under their convoy, and shall proceed to the southward, we think it probable that they may have some other destination than either the coast of Great Britain or Ireland ; and a junction with the French fleet in the Mediterranean seems not an improbable destination. But if the force, so detached by the enemy, should not exceed five or six ships of the line, and these should be full of troops, it is very probable their destination may be to the Leeward Islands ; you are therefore, in such a case, directed to send a detachment from your fleet, proportionate

to that which may have been sent off by the enemy ; and the squadron, which you may so detach, is to be instructed to endeavour, by every means in their power, to discover the destination of the enemy's detachment, and to pursue them for the purpose of taking or destroying them. But if no intelligence can be obtained of the destination of the detachment from the enemy's fleet, the detachment from your fleet is then to return to their former station off Brest.

If the enemy should leave Brest either with the whole or a strong detachment of their fleet, it is not improbable they may do it with a view of attacking separately the blockading squadrons off Rochefort and Ferrol, and thereby relieve their own squadrons that are now shut up in those ports. It will therefore be proper to guard against such an attempt on the part of the enemy, by directing Vice-Admiral Sir R. Calder and Rear-Admiral Cochrane respectively, to form a junction with their two squadrons at such rendezvous, either on the north coast of Spain or elsewhere, as you may think expedient to fix upon. To enable them so to do, the rendezvous should be previously fixed, and the commanding officers directed to form the junction as soon as circumstances may render it expedient. No precaution ought to be omitted that can ensure the intelligence of the enemy's having left Brest reaching the commanders of the squadrons off Rochefort and Ferrol ; and therefore, in the event of your learning that the whole, or a part, of the enemy's fleet has put to sea, unobserved by you, or of your being unable immediately to ascertain its course, so as to follow the enemy with your whole fleet or an adequate detachment, you are immediately to send a fast sailing frigate to Vice-Admiral Sir R. Calder and to Rear-Admiral

Cochrane to apprise them thereof. Those officers are however to be instructed not, on any account, to quit their stations, except they should be obliged so to do, from the appearance of a superior hostile force, or from stress of weather. In the former case, the officer so obliged to quit his station will either proceed to form a junction with the other, or wait the junction of a detachment from your fleet, according to circumstances and to the instructions which he may receive from you for his guidance; and should the enemy's squadrons remain in the ports of Rochefort and Ferrol, notwithstanding the blockades thereof may have been raised from necessity, it is most advisable that the officers, who had commanded the blockades, should be instructed to return to their former stations and to watch the motions of the enemy's squadrons in those harbours. You are further instructed to keep us constantly informed of every material event, and of the steps you may think it advisable to take in consequence of these instructions. You will also forward similar intelligence to Lord Gardner in Cork Harbour.

You will be particularly attentive to watch the Passage du Raz, not only by the means of your inshore or advanced squadron, but also by two frigates and two sloops or cutters stationed to the southward close to that passage, with instructions to their commanders to give you the earliest intelligence in case of the enemy's passing that way, and also to Vice-Admiral Sir R. Calder and Rear-Admiral Cochrane. A small vessel or two may always be kept well up between the Toulinguet Pass¹ and the Pass du Raz. The Passage du Four

¹ Misspelt Trolinquet in the draft. The Hydrographer writes: 'There is 6 fms. least water in it; but with a 24 ft. rise of tide, it would be quite possible to use it, coming out of

being an intricate navigation, it is not probable that the enemy will attempt to pass out that way with their fleet. It will however be proper that you should station some small vessels near to it, to the northward, in case they should make the attempt.

If it should come on to blow strong from the westward, or the southward and westward, so as to reduce you to a low sail, you are not to risk damaging the fleet under your command by contending against the elements, but you are to bear up for, and to take shelter in Torbay. Your advanced squadron should also be instructed to bear up, should the gale increase so as to render it necessary, and the frigates and small vessels should, in such cases, be instructed to resort to the most western anchorages. You will, however, take care to put to sea upon the first moment of a wind favourable to your returning to your station off Ushant; and you will also instruct the officer in command of the advanced squadron, and the commanders of the frigates and small vessels, to proceed in like manner.

And in order to enable you either to follow the enemy wherever they may go, or to detach a part of your force after them, you are to keep the ships in the fleet under your command as complete in their stores and provisions for five months as circumstances will permit; sending them in succession to Cawsand Bay for that purpose; and you will also inform Vice-Admiral Young, at Plymouth, of such supplies as you may require from time to time, that he may give the necessary

Brest, *en route* for Raz du Sein.' But at the best, it is dangerous. The admiralty had, however, information which, perhaps, Cornwallis had not, that the French fleet, coming out of Brest in 1796, went through the Raz du Sein.

directions to the agent victualler at Plymouth for their being sent to you, when the weather is favourable for receiving supplies at sea. We are aware that many circumstances may occur to which these Instructions are inapplicable, or for which no provision is made. In those cases you must use your discretion and judgment for your guidance, giving us the earliest information of your proceedings through our secretary.

Given the 24th August, 1804.

MELVILLE.

J. GAMBIER.

J. COLPOYS.¹

17th September, 1804.

[In consequence of intelligence from Rear-Admiral Cochrane, of hostile preparations at Ferrol, to reinforce him with two line-of-battle ships.]

[Draft.]

18th September, 1804.

You are hereby required and directed to give immediate orders to Rear-Admiral Cochrane to continue the blockade of the port of Ferrol with the utmost vigilance, not only with the view of preventing the French squadron from escaping from that port, but likewise with a view of preventing any of the Spanish ships of war from sailing from Ferrol, or any additional ships of war from entering that port; and if in consequence of your correspondence with Rear-Admiral Cochrane you should be of opinion that the force under the rear-admiral is not adequate to the purposes abovementioned, you are without delay to reinforce the squadron under his command,

¹ The signatures are written in the same hand as the body of the draft.

and measures will be taken with all possible expedition to send out to you a sufficient number of ships to replace the force which you may so detach. You are to send intimation to the Spanish Government, through Rear-Admiral Cochran, of the instructions you have given to the rear-admiral, and of your determination in consequence thereof, to resist, under the present circumstances, the sailing either of the French or Spanish fleets, if any attempt for that purpose should be made by either of them.

And whereas information has been received that some frigates are speedily expected to arrive at Cadiz, loaded with treasure from South America, you are to lose no time in detaching two of the frigates under your command, with orders to their captains to proceed with all possible dispatch off Cadiz and the entrance of the Straits, and to use their best endeavours, in conjunction with any of his Majesty's ships they may find there, to intercept, if possible, the vessels in which the above-mentioned treasure may be contained, and to detain them until his Majesty's pleasure shall be further known.¹

Given the 18th September, 1804.

J. GAMBIER.
JNO. COLPOYS.
PH. PATTON.²

25th September, 1804.

[In addition to second order of the 18th inst., to order the commanders of all H.M. ships to detain any Spanish ships laden with naval or military stores.³]

¹ See *Blockade of Brest*, ii. 75, 87.

² The signatures copied. ³ *Blockade of Brest*, ii. 86.

THE COMMAND OFF BREST 241

14th December, 1804.

[To detain all Spanish ships.¹]

17th December, 1804.

[Enclosing copy of Order in Council directing an additional office under the style of 'Sub-Lieutenant,' to be established in brigs, commanded by lieutenants.]

2nd January, 1805.

[Spanish ships, having proper passports from the admiralty, to proceed on their respective voyages.²]

12th January, 1805.

[To seize or destroy all ships and vessels belonging to Spain.³]

4th February, 1805.

[Not to detain any neutral ship, laden with grain only, bound to Spain.]

[Draft.]

13th February, 1805.

You are hereby required and directed to cause one of the ships named in the margin [St. George or Barfleur] with four of the two-decked ships under your command which may be in the best condition for service, to be completed in their water, stores, and provisions to a proper proportion for six months, from the other ships of your squadron; and so soon as they shall be ready, to order their captains to proceed, as expeditiously as possible, off Ferrol; and upon joining the Hon. Alexander Cochrane, rear-admiral

¹ Cornwallis did not receive this order till 11th January, 1805.
—*Blockade of Brest*, ii. 152.

² *Ib.* 152.

³ *Ib.* 154. War was not declared by England till 24th January.
Cf. *ib.* 145-6.

of the blue, put themselves under his command, and follow his orders for their further proceedings.¹

Given the 13th February, 1805.

J. GAMBIER.

JNO. COLPOYS.

PH. PATTON.²

To Admiral Young, to be forwarded by a cutter.

Mr. Marsden to Admiral Cornwallis

[Office Copy.]

Admiralty Office. 14th February, 1805.

Sir,—My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty having judged it expedient to order Rear-Admiral Cochrane to proceed with six ships of the line under his command on distant service, I have their lordships' commands to signify their direction to you not to consider the said rear-admiral, the Northumberland, and five ships which you have been directed to put under his orders, as any longer under your command, but to employ one of the flag officers under your orders on the service of watching the enemy's ships at Ferrol.³ I have the honour . . .

[Office Copy.]

Admiralty Office. 23rd February, 1805.

Sir,—The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, being desirous to prevent as much as possible the wear and tear of the ships under your command, and to preserve them in a fit state for service, have commanded me to signify to you their direction that on your next arrival in Torbay with the fleet, and for the future, you continue there, although the wind should come round to the

¹ See *Blockade of Brest*, ii. 185.

² Signatures copied.

³ *Blockade of Brest*, ii. 185.

northward so as to enable you to return to your station off Ushant; but that if you shall receive intelligence of the enemy's ships having put to sea from Brest, or if the wind should come so far round to the eastward as to make it advisable for the greater safety of the ships under your command to put to sea, you are, in such cases, to proceed to your station off Ushant, provided the number of ships with you, or that you may be able to collect, shall amount to 17 sail of the line; but in the event of your not being able to collect that number, you are to proceed off the Lizard with the ships you may have with you, and remain there until you shall be joined by as many ships as will make up the number abovementioned, and be guided by the instructions which you have already received from their lordships.¹ I have the honour . . .

W. MARSDEN.

L.C.A. to Lord Gardner

[*Abstract.*]

25th April, 1805.

[To keep the ships in constant readiness to proceed on any distant service for which they may be wanted.]

Mr. Marsden to Lord Gardner

[*Office Copy.*]

Admiralty Office. 26th April, 1805.

My Lord,—I have it in command from my L.C.A. to acquaint you, that in consequence of the information given to your lordship by Captain Poyntz, of the French squadron from Toulon having passed through the Straits of Gibraltar,²

¹ Acknowledged from Torbay, on the 25th. Cf. *Blockade of Brest*, ii. 189.

² *Ib.* 236.

you will probably receive, in the course of a few days, directions from their lordships to make a detachment of four sail of the line from the fleet under your command; and it is therefore their lordships' direction, in case the wind should come to blow from the westward and you should judge it expedient to put into Torbay, that you order four of the two-decked ships under your command, which have been fitted for foreign service, to proceed off the Lizard, with instructions to their captains to cruise within five leagues thereof, until they receive further orders.¹ I have the honour to be . . .

[Copy.]

29th April, 1805.

My Lord,—Having received and communicated to my L.C.A. your lordship's letter of the 26th inst.,² inclosing copy of one from Vice-Admiral Sir John Orde to his Majesty's minister at Lisbon, I have their lordships' commands to signify their direction to you, in consequence of the intelligence therein contained, to suspend the execution of any orders your lordship may eventually have received for detaching Vice-Admiral Collingwood³ with a squadron of ships to the westward, or forwarding a frigate to cruise for the vice-admiral, in the manner directed by my letter of yesterday's date. I am further commanded to acquaint your lordship that you will shortly receive their lordships' further instructions for your guidance.⁴ I have the honour to be . . .

[Draft.]

4th May, 1805.

Your lordship is hereby required and directed to deliver to Vice-Admiral Collingwood the

¹ See *Blockade of Brest*, ii. 245.

² *Ib.* 247.

³ *Ib.* 240.

⁴ *Ib.* 250-1.

enclosed packet bearing his address, and, putting seven of the two-decked ships of your squadron under his command (selecting those which have been fitted for foreign service), direct him to proceed with them and the Dreadnought, with all possible dispatch, to the southward and westward; and when he shall have got to the distance of fifty leagues from Ushant, to open the said packet, and carry into execution the instructions therein contained for his further proceedings.¹

[Copy.]

Admiralty Office. 8th May, 1805.

My Lord,—I have it in command from my L.C.A. to signify their direction to your lordship, in case the Foudroyant should be ready, and it should be the means of forwarding H.M. Service, that you detach that ship, and Rear-Admiral Sir Thomas Graves, whose flag is flying in her, with Vice-Admiral Collingwood, notwithstanding the intimation respecting the Foudroyant contained in my letter to you of the 6th inst.

I have the honour to be . . .

W. MARSDEN.

L.C.A. to Lord Gardner

[Draft.]

10th May, 1805.

Your lordship is hereby required and directed (notwithstanding any former orders) to put eight sail of the line (in addition to the Dreadnought) under the command of Vice-Admiral Collingwood, and to order the vice-admiral to proceed, with the said ships, without a moment's loss of time to Barbados, and on his arrival there to carry into execution the instructions contained in our order to him of this day's date, which is herewith

¹ See *Blockade of Brest*, ii. 255, 258.

enclosed. In case the whole of the nine ships above-mentioned should not be ready to proceed with Vice-Admiral Collingwood, you are to order the vice-admiral to proceed with such of them as may be ready, leaving instructions with the captains of the remaining ships to follow him to Barbados, as they are ready so to do. Your lordship will direct Vice-Admiral Collingwood to leave with the said captains a sealed rendezvous, which they are not to open until they reach the distance prescribed thereon by the said vice-admiral.¹

Given the 10th May, 1805.

BARHAM.

J. GAMBIER.

PH. PATTON.²

[Draft.]

25th May, 1805.

It having lately been found necessary to make considerable detachments from the squadron under your lordship's command, by which it is reduced to a less number than that of the enemy, and it being our intention, as the ships now fitting in port come forward, to reinforce your squadron with as many of the line as will not only increase it to a number equal to that of the enemy at Brest and Ferrol, but so as to admit of further detachments being made whenever it may be found expedient so to do: In order, therefore, to enable your lordship to carry into effect this important object without delay, when circumstances may render it necessary, you are hereby required and directed to keep the ships and vessels under your command as complete as possible in their stores and provisions, taking care that, whenever you shall have occasion to send ships into port, either to refit or

¹ See *Blockade of Brest*, ii. 260-1.

² Signatures copied.

replenish or for any other purpose, you cause such stores and provisions to be taken out of them as can conveniently be spared, for the purpose of completing other ships of the fleet ; to the end that, by these means and the supplies sent out from Plymouth from time to time, the whole, or the greater part of the ships under your command may be held in constant readiness to proceed on any distant service for which they may be wanted, without that delay which would unavoidably arise from any want of attention in making the necessary preparations.

Your lordship is further required and directed, whenever ships are sent to Plymouth, whose defects may appear to be such as to make it expedient for them to be taken into a dock, to state your opinion accordingly, for our information ; selecting such for the preference as, either from the length of time since they were last in dock, or from their heavy sailing on account of the foulness of their copper, may appear to you to be most in need of it.

And whereas the enemy has not only considerably increased its number of ships of the line by forming a junction with a Spanish squadron in the port of Cadiz, but, from intelligence received of naval preparations in other ports of Spain, it is probable that additional reinforcements may speedily be brought forward ; and as by superior skill and activity alone, our well-grounded hopes must rest for success against a superior force, we recommend to your lordship's attention, and do, hereby, particularly require and direct you to use all the means in your power to keep the ships under your command in the highest possible order, and in a perfect state of discipline and readiness for service, omitting no opportunity which the weather

and other circumstances will allow, of exercising them in all the various evolutions contained in the book of signals, such as forming the fleet alternately into the order of sailing and lines of battle, &c., &c., to the end that you may, on all occasions, be enabled to avail yourself of the superior advantages which must necessarily be derived from the active and skilful operations of a well-disciplined fleet. Your lordship is moreover required and directed to keep the frigates under your command so stationed that they may be enabled to obtain and convey to you the earliest information of any movements in the enemy's ports, and in such a manner as may appear to be most effectual for the protection of the trade of the United Kingdom, both foreign and domestic.

Given the 25th May, 1805.

BARHAM.

J. GAMBIER.

PH. PATTON.

GARLIES.¹

24th June, 1805.

[In consequence of information that smuggling vessels carry out copper under their ballast, to the enemy's ports, to order cruisers to search such vessels.]

Mr. Marsden to Admiral Cornwallis, at Sea

[Copy.]

Admiralty Office. 26th July, 1805.

Sir,—Rear-Admiral Drury, commanding his Majesty's ships and vessels at Cork, being directed, in case of any part of the enemy's squadron being seen by the ships or vessels under his command,

¹ Signatures copied.

to send intelligence thereof by a fast sailing vessel to Vice-Admiral Lord Nelson in Lagos Bay, and also to you off Brest, as well as to me, for the information of my L.C.A., I have their lordships' commands to acquaint you therewith, and am, Sir, . . .

W. MARSDEN.

[Copy.]

26th July, 1805.

Sir,—I have it in command from my L.C.A. to signify their direction to you to send three more of the ships of the line under your orders to the Downs with all possible dispatch, and not to consider them as any longer under your command. I am . . .

[Copy.]

3rd August, 1805.

Sir,—I have it in command from my L.C.A. to signify their direction to you, on being joined by Vice-Admiral Sir Robert Calder, to send such of the ships under his command as are most in need of repair, to Cawsand Bay, for the purpose of getting their defects made good and completing their stores and provisions; and to direct the commanders of such of the said ships as require their lower masts to be shifted, to proceed to Spithead for that purpose. I am . . .

[Copy.]

3rd August, 1805.

Sir,—I have it in command from my L.C.A. to send you herewith a copy of their lordships' order of this day's date to Vice-Admiral Lord Nelson, and to signify their direction to you, upon being joined by the said vice-admiral, to detain such of the ships under his command with you, as are in a proper condition to keep the sea;

to send those most in want of repair to Cawsand Bay and Spithead, and direct his lordship to proceed in one of them to the last mentioned anchorage and remain there until he receives further order. I am . . .

9th August, 1805.

[Acquainting him that the enemy have it in contemplation to attempt immediately the invasion of this country from the ports of Holland and Boulogne.]

16th August, 1805.

[To order cruisers to take such stations as may enable them to fall in with East India homeward-bound ships, and to impress their crews.]

19th August, 1805.

[After retaining 18 sail of the line off Ushant, to order Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Cotton and two other flag officers, with 20 ships of the line, to proceed off Ferrol.]

27th August, 1805.

[To detach a flag officer with four or five sail of the line and two frigates, to cruise 100 leagues WSW of Scilly, for the purpose of endeavouring to fall in with the homeward-bound East and West India fleets.]

ADMIRAL CORNWALLIS¹ TO BARHAM

Newlands, Lymington. 28th April, 1805.

Dear Sir,—I am very glad to find that you have accepted the office of first lord of the admiralty, and very unwilling indeed I should be

¹ Cornwallis's letters are all holographs.

to intrude upon you a few lines, if I did not almost feel it a duty to state that I came on shore to stretch my legs after near two years' confinement on board. I hope, however, to be able to return (if it meets with your approbation) towards the middle of next month, about which time my leave of absence will expire. That you may, by filling the high and important office in which his Majesty has been pleased to place you, be able to render the most essential service to your country is the most hearty wish of,

Dear Sir,

With the greatest respect,
Your most obedient and
most humble servant,
W. CORNWALLIS.

Lord Barham to Cornwallis

[Badly written draft at the foot
of the previous letter.]

Admiralty.
31st [sic] April, 1805.

Dear Sir,—I am very much obliged by your congratulations. I am aware of the difficulties attending the office I have undertaken, but hope, with proper assistance, to be able to meet them. I have not yet taken my seat at the board, and am therefore ignorant of what has happened on the subject of commands.

I am, &c.,
BARHAM.

LORD GARDNER TO MR. MARSDEN

[Signed.]

Hibernia: off Ushant. 3rd May, 1805.

Sir,—I yesterday evening received your letter, of the 27th ultimo, stating that, on an examination of the logs of two of the ships lately under the

command of Rear-Admiral Sir Thomas Graves, it appears that the rear-admiral with his squadron was at anchor in Quiberon Bay from the 2nd to the 10th of January, and off his station before Rochefort at the time the enemy's squadron put to sea from that port; and signifying their lordships' directions to me to call upon the rear-admiral to account for his being off his station during the time above mentioned. In answer thereto, I am to acquaint you that I have directed the rear-admiral to report to me for their lordships' information accordingly, and have received the enclosed, which I transmit herewith.

I have the honour to be . . .

GARDNER.

Minutes.—7 May. Send in the Log Book of the Mars and another ship received at the same time (about the 26th ult^o).

24 June. Desire Admiral Cornwallis to send a copy of the orders under which R.-Admiral Sir T. Graves acted in January last, when off Rochefort.

ENCLOSURE

Sir Thomas Graves to Lord Gardner

[Signed.]

Foudroyant: at Sea. 3rd May, 1805.

My Lord,—I lose not a moment in answering your lordship's letter of this day's date, and I beg leave to acquaint your lordship for the information of the L.C.A., that, from the 2nd to the 10th of January was employed in watering the ships, two of them having reported to me that they had not sixty tons of water on board, and that they were not one moment longer in Quiberon Bay than I could get them to sea.

Being conscious that I have ever most faithfully and zealously executed my duty to my king and country, I shall feel infinite pleasure in having every part of my conduct investigated.

I have the honour to be, with great respect, . . .

THOS. GRAVES.

Note by Admiral Patton

[Autograph.]

24th June.

The means by which the Rochefort squadron got to sea were that Rear-Admiral Graves anchored in Quiberon Bay, where the French could not fail to see his ships; and as they were above 20 leagues from Rochefort, that squadron sailed with the utmost security of not being intercepted. Rear-Admiral Graves in his letter to Lord Gardner dated 3rd May, states, as the reason, that two of his ships had only 60 tons of water each, and that he went to the Island of Houat in Quiberon Bay to procure water, and sailed again as soon as that was effected.

Lord Gardner to Lord Barham

[Holograph.]

Hibernia, off Ushant. 25th June, 1805.

My dear Lord,— I had the honour of receiving your lordship's letter of the 19th instant yesterday, and am glad to find that my sentiments accord with your lordship's as to the probable consequences if two commanders-in-chief should be appointed to the Channel fleet to relieve each other, but not to act together; acquainting me that Admiral Cornwallis is ordered to resume his command, and that nothing will be wanting on your lordship's part to make my situation agreeable. I am sure

you must be aware of the very unpleasant situation in which I have been placed, both with respect to Admiral Cornwallis and Vice-Admiral Sir Charles Cotton, which I can assure your lordship has occasioned a degree of anxiety and uneasiness in my mind not easily to be described, and which has affected my health and depressed my spirits so much, that I find myself unequal to the discharge of my duty in the manner I could wish ; nor have I any hope of my being able to do so, until my mind is more at ease.

I am therefore to request, on the Hibernia's arrival in Cawsand Bay (to which place I am directed to proceed on my giving up the command to Admiral Cornwallis), that I may be indulged with two months' leave of absence for the re-establishment of my health. And on this occasion I hope your lordship will allow me to recommend to your favourable notice for promotion my first lieutenant, Mr. Thomas Oliver, who I made a lieutenant in the year 1793, has served me many years and is a deserving good officer.

I have the honour to be, my Lord,

Your most obedient and faithful humble
servant,

GARDNER.

Lord Barham to (?) Cornwallis

[*Rough copy. Autograph.*]

Admiralty. June, 1805.

Dear Sir,—As it is very evident from the arrangements that are making by the enemy in their several ports, and their late attempts on the Windward Islands, that depredation and the destruction of our trade is their grand object, it will be necessary to guard as much as possible

against it, however necessary it may have been for his Majesty's government at the commencement of the war to guard against any attempts being made to invade this country.¹ It strikes me, therefore, that small squadrons of our best sailing two-decked ships and larger frigates will be the best guard we can give against their design. The best sailing ships should on this account be those chosen for Rochefort and Ferrol, and to change them occasionally, as well as their admirals, when clean ships are sent out. For these and other purposes, I have recommended one of the sea members of this board to superintend the watering, victualling and storing the ships of your squadron so that the whole may be in constant readiness for detaching, or any other services they may be

(Stops abruptly.)

MEMORANDUM

[? 8th July, 1805.]

There are now off Brest or sailed for that	
station	22
Off Rochefort	5
Off Ferrol, including the 2 sent from off Roche-	
fort	12
In port refitting—Goliath	1
If the Defence is continued with the Channel	
fleet	1
All manned and stored	41

¹ His meaning apparently is that the enemy's design being now to harass our colonies and trade, the danger of invasion must take a second place in our considerations.

There are now coming forward :

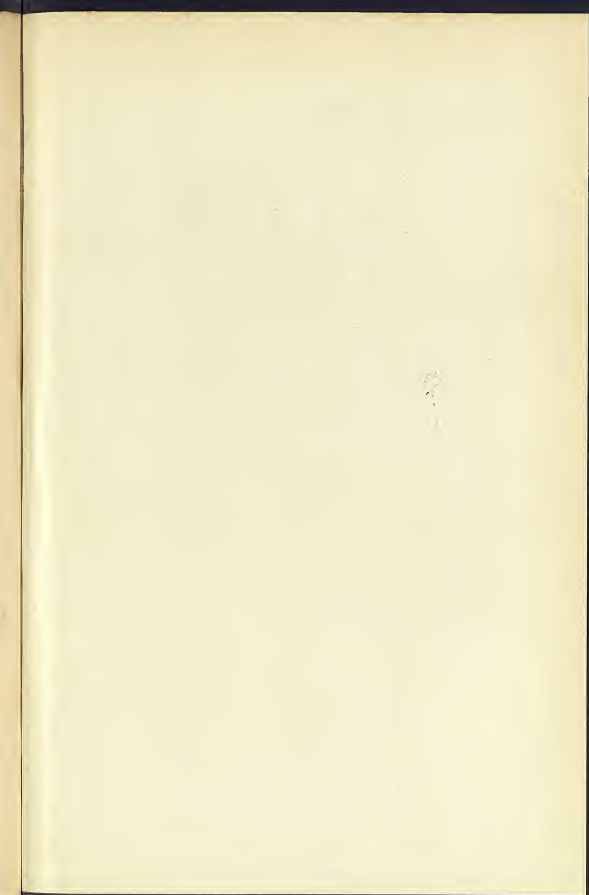
The Zealous	} These 5 ought to be able to replace the ships coming in for refitment.
Orion	
Captain	
Audacious	
Bellona	

By this means there will be from 38 to 40 sail of the line applicable to the Brest, Rochefort and Ferrol squadrons. On the present occasion let 10 sail be detached from off Brest to reinforce the squadron off Cadiz because I take it for granted that only 4 remain there at present.

Admiral Collingwood sailed with 9. Sir R. Bickerton with the *Queen*=10. Five were ordered to remain off Cadiz and 5 to go up the Mediterranean, but as 2 were dispatched to W. Indies, I allow 4 for each service only.

That makes a strong force in the very spot where they may be expected. Let the Ferrol squadron get three additional frigates and be ordered to stretch out to the NNW of Cape Finisterre, keeping up their communication with Ferrol by means of the frigates, and showing themselves off Ferrol itself occasionally and at such undetermined periods, as to disguise the real object of their cruise. While the Rochefort squadron remains steadily off that port and keeps up the blockade as strictly as possible, let the fleet off Brest (reduced for the moment to 12 sail, but reinforced by the *Defence*, *Goliath* and *Zealous* = 15) be ordered to stretch out to the SSW, in a direct line from Cape Finisterre—and by means of frigates keep up the communication with the Ferrol squadron.

Before these plans were developed to the



1805
My idea is to send the intelligence immediately to
Adm^t. Curlewelly who may be directed to strengthen the Am
Robert Calder Synanon with the rockmotsack & ^{ghim a yk}
K'ingesth Cap. Sancha p 10 to 15 learn the West. as they make
him up 1805. I selected Sgt J. Wood & Warland with his own boys
of some strength for 10 days.

Calder & the left to Lord Nelson

9 July.

enemy, the cause for their existence would cease—i.e. the combined fleets either would have returned to Europe or the uncertainty with regard to their motions would be at an end. The interception of the fleet in question on its return to Europe, would be a greater object than any I know. It would damp all future expeditions, and would show to Europe that it might even be advisable to relax in the blockading system occasionally for the express purpose of putting them in our power at a convenient opportunity.

MEMORANDUM

[*Barham's Autograph.*]

9th July, 1805.

My idea is to send the intelligence immediately to Admiral Cornwallis, who may be directed to strengthen Sir Robert Calder's squadron with the Rochefort squadron and as many ships of his own as will make him up to 15, and cruise off Cape Finisterre from 10 to 50 leagues to the west. To stand to the southward and westward with his own ships, at the same distance, for 10 days.

Cadiz to be left to Lord Nelson.¹

¹ See Facsimile. It cannot escape notice that the idea here and in the subsequent order is essentially that of the earlier memorandum (p. 256), which was clearly (though not necessarily first) suggested by Nicholas Brown in his letter of 6th July. See *ante*, p. 194.

THE CALDER EPISODE

Lord Barham to Admiral Cornwallis

[Copy.]

9th July, 1805.

Dear Sir,—If we are not too late, I think there is a chance of our intercepting the Toulon fleet—Nelson follows them to Cadiz and, if you can immediately unite the Ferrol and Rochefort squadrons and order them to cruise from 30 to 40 leagues to the westward, and stretch out with your own fleet as far and continue 6 or 8 days on that service, and then return to your several posts, I think we have some chance of intercepting them. Official orders will follow as fast as possible.

Yours,

BARHAM.

Time is everything.

L.C.A. to Admiral Cornwallis

[Draft.]

9th July, 1805.

Intelligence being received by H.M.'s brig Curieux that the combined French and Spanish squadrons, which passed Antigua on the 8th ultimo, had been seen by that vessel on the 20th and 21st, in latitude $33^{\circ} 12' N$, and Long. $58^{\circ} W$, steering at first N b E, but afterwards altering their course to NNW, and there being grounds to suppose that it is their intention to make some port in France or Spain: You are hereby required and directed to strengthen the squadron off Ferrol,

under the orders of Vice-Admiral Sir Robert Calder, with the ships off Rochefort under Rear-Admiral Stirling, and instruct the vice-admiral to proceed without loss of time off Cape Finisterre, from whence he is to cruise for the enemy to the distance of thirty to forty leagues to the westward, for the space of six or eight days.¹

You are further required and directed to stretch, with the fleet under your immediate command, about the same distance to the south-westward, and for the same space of time; at the expiration of which, the several squadrons are to return to their respective stations; and you will furnish our secretary, for our information, with an account of your proceedings.

BARHAM.

J. GAMBIER.

GARLIES.²

Sir Robert Calder to Lord Barham

Prince of Wales at Sea,
23rd July,³ 1805.

[Holograph.]

My Lord,—I have had the good fortune to have fallen in with the combined squadrons of Toulon and Cadiz upon their return from the West Indies. The action has been unique, having been fought in a fog at night. I hope your lordship and my royal master will think I have done all that it was possible to have be done. If so, and you should think me deserving of any mark of his royal bounty, I beg leave to observe I have no children, but I have a nephew, the son

¹ Cf. *Blockade of Brest*, ii. 301, 303-5.

² Barham's signature is autograph; Garlies' also; Gambier's probably, but doubtful.

³ Calder's official letter, of this date, to Cornwallis, is given in *Blockade of Brest*, ii. 311.

of an old faithful servant of the crown, who died in the service as a general and Lieut. Governor of Gibraltar,—to whom I hope his Majesty's royal bounty may extend, if my services should be thought worthy of any mark from his Majesty. I shall, as soon as I have secured the prizes and put my squadron to rights, do everything I shall judge prudent at these critical times; well knowing the consequence of risking this squadron at this moment, when the Ferrol and Rochefort squadrons are upon the move. If I find things are as I apprehend, I shall make the best of my way to Ushant. I shall look about me for a few days, in the hope of falling in with Lord Nelson, who may be close at the heels of these gentry. Let what will happen, rest assured, my lord, I shall be upon my guard, and at the same time do all in my power for his Majesty's service and the good of my country, as far as my abilities will enable me to act.

I have the honour to be, my lord, with very great respect and true regard,

Your Lordship's

Ever most faithful and obedient humble
servant

ROBT. CALDER.

*D. Federico Gravina*¹ to the Prince of the Peace

Vigo. 28th July, 1805.

Most excellent Sir, My Lord,—Cape Finisterre bearing SE, distance 25 leagues, on the 22nd July

¹ This is the dispatch relating to the 22nd July. The original was published in the *Gaceta de Madrid* of 6th, 9th August, but has (as far as is known) not been reprinted. There is not a copy of the *Gaceta* in the British Museum; nor has a translation of it been printed. So the very bad translation sent to Barham is the best and first.

the combined squadron was standing, with the wind WNW, formed in three lines, to the ESE, the horizon being covered with thick fogs. At noon, the look-out vessels made the signal of having discovered 21 sail in the NNE, and that the greater part were of the line. We immediately formed the line of battle to larboard; the Spanish squadron formed the van, with myself at the head and the French admiral in the centre of the line. The enemy, consisting of 16 sail of the line, three of which were three-deckers, and two cut-downs, stood on the contrary tack, with the intention—as it appeared—of cutting off our rear; to avoid which, the French admiral made the signal to wear and stand on the opposite tack, which was immediately obeyed. The last ship of the rear being covered, the *Argonauta*, on board of which I had hoisted my flag, began the action with the van of the English at a $\frac{1}{4}$ before 5 o'clock, who, upon account of the fog, had not perceived the movement we had executed. The enemy's squadron hauled their wind, and a very warm action immediately commenced within half-cannon shot, between our van and the whole of the enemy's line, which successively extended itself to the centre of our line. The fog was so thick that, notwithstanding our proximity, we at times lost sight of them. The fire was very well kept during the action; we saw a three-decker without her foremast, and another vessel without her main and mizzen-mast. The battle continued with our van and centre until past 9 o'clock, when the enemy bore up and the action ceased; we *pusimos en facha*.¹ On the morning of the 23rd at break of day, although the weather was still foggy, we found that two of our

¹ 'We brought to.' The translator's ignorance of so common a phrase is a fair measure of the badness of the whole.

ships were missing and that they were the San Rafael and the Firme. We discovered the enemy on the other tack. We immediately wore, formed the line and chased, having remarked that they had three dismasted ships in tow and that their line consisted of only 13 ships of war, including one dismasted of its fore topmast. We continued the chase the whole day without avail, as the enemy manœuvred to avoid a second encounter. The same took place on the 24th, on the morning of which day we saw them to windward, crowding all sail and close hauled, with the wind from the NE. On the 25th at daybreak, the wind blowing fresh from the NE, with a heavy sea, we were out of sight of the enemy, and during the day we saw Cape Finisterre bearing due E. In this situation, with wind against our getting into Ferrol, many of the French ships having only six days' water on board, and having above 1300 sick and wounded in the squadron, without the necessary succours, it was determined to come to Vigo to provide what was necessary.

As soon as I receive the details from each ship they shall be forwarded to your excellency. In this action the six ships under my command have fought with the greatest bravery and I consider the English squadron having avoided a second attack to have been caused by the damage they received in the action, since the forces of the two fleets were equalised by the quality of the ships—we having, on our side, no 3-deckers and two small ships of 64 guns.

Lieut. Stephen Popham¹ to Sir Home Popham

H.M. Ship *Glory*: Lat. $46^{\circ} 27' N.$, Long. $4^{\circ} 23' W.$
3rd August, 1805.

[The letter opens abruptly with a list of the fleets—
not here reprinted—and continues:]

July 22, at noon, the *Defiance*, being one of the look-out ships, made the signal for a fleet; thick hazy weather; she edged down to reconnoitre the fleet; wind WNW. At $\frac{1}{4}$ past 2 the *Defiance* made the signal that the enemy's fleet consisted of 20 sail of the line. At 4 the order of battle was formed by signal; at 40' past 4 the *Prince of Wales* made the signal to engage the centre of the enemy. At 5' past 5 the action commenced between the van of our fleet and the enemy. Weather so foggy that we could not see our leader, only at intervals. At 6, the *Prince of Wales* passed on the opposite tack, to windward, and hailed, but we did not hear the purport of their hailing. At 6.10', tacked in our station in the order of battle; 6.15, commenced action with some of the enemy's ships. The engagement now became general throughout our line; backing and filling occasionally the top sails to preserve the order. Thick, hazy weather; 6.29, ceased firing, the *Raisable* being in our way; 6.31, re-commenced engaging; 6.46, observed the *Raisable's* main top-gallant yard gone. At 7.25, *Warrior*, on our lee quarter, engaging at three cables' length distance; 7.35, observed her fore top-gallant yard down. A Spanish line of battle ship to windward with her main and mizzen top-gallant yards shot away; 7.55, one of the

¹ A Lieutenant of 1801.

enemy's ships W b N ; main and mizzen masts shot away ; 8.5, she passed us with her colours struck. Engaging the French vice-admiral and a Spanish ship of the line ; 8.25, the latter hauled down her colours to a cluster of ships. Left off action ; ordered the Thunderer and Malta to take possession of the ships that had struck. The French vice-admiral was feebly supported by two French 74s. or 80s. I think he came down to the support of the two Spanish ships ; and had the whole of their line followed his example, the loss on both sides would have been more considerable, but, I dare venture to say, we should have had more trophies of victory. The French vice-admiral, by his gallant conduct, brought his ship into such a fire, that had he not made sail in the quick manner he did, he must inevitably have fallen in a few minutes. The Hero, Barfleur, Agamemnon and Windsor Castle carried their main-sails during the action, which brought them into the thick of it. The weather being thick at first was I think favourable for the van ships ; but had it fortunately then cleared away, the victory might, in all probability, [have] been more decisive. There is certainly one great point gained : that is, preventing their forming a junction with the Ferrol squadron. They kept their wind the whole night and until the morning of the 24th when, after one of their frigates had reconnoitred us, they bore up, steering about SSE, leaving us with two of their ships in tow and one of ours disabled—the Windsor Castle having lost her fore top-mast, and fore-mast so badly wounded that she could not get another up, but obliged to make shift with a top-gallant mast. I have not as yet been able to get a correct list of our killed and wounded, which, however, is trifling compared

with the captured ships ; but the Gazette will no doubt have given you it. Admiral Stirling left Ferrol on the 1st inst., with the Warrior, Triumph, and Reasonable and his own ship, but the Triumph's main-mast is so bad that she is going in ; her bowsprit is wounded and fore-mast sprung. I believe he intended to resume his station off Rochefort, but his force is now so much reduced, I fear he cannot attempt it. Sir Robert Calder has nine sail of the line left with him. Should this action cause a promotion in the navy—which is generally supposed—I trust I may flatter myself with the hope that you will endeavour to get me included,¹ and being fortunately in a flag-ship, I trust you will not find so much difficulty as if I was in a private one. I have given you the narrative of the action taken from the minutes, which I hope you will find correct, and, should it prove entertaining, it will afford me infinite pleasure. Madame Bonaparte's mother was on board the Bucentaure. They appear to have done nothing in the West Indies worth mentioning. Rock Diamond, a sloop of war, and some light transports is the extent of their conquests. May I beg you to present my most respectful compliments to Lady Popham. When we engaged, Cape Finisterre bore SE b E, 49 leagues. Believe me to remain, with great esteem,

dear Sir Home,

Your affectionate nephew,

STEPHEN POPHAM.

P.S.—The Dragon, being one of the look-out ships, could not come up till the business was

¹ There does not seem to have been any special promotion, and at any rate the writer was not made till 1811. He was posted in 1815, but had no further service, and died in 1842. See Marshall, viii. 85, where his seniority is misdated by a year.

almost over ; which shows the necessity of always having a sufficient number of frigates attached to a squadron. I never before saw the necessity of it.

Admiral Young¹ to Lord Barham

My Lord,—By the lists which I have received from the Spanish ships, it appears that the crew of the *San Rafael*² amounts to eight hundred and fifty-three persons (853), of whom only two hundred and ninety-seven (297) are sailors, including officers of every description, and all the boys ; one hundred and sixteen (116) are marines, and all the rest are soldiers belonging to several different regiments. The crew of the *Firme*² is six hundred and seventeen (617), of whom two hundred and thirty-one (231) are sailors ; seventy-eight (78) marines, and the rest soldiers. From this account I think it will appear evident to your lordship that the troops on board were not embarked for the purpose of any military operations on shore, but to supply the place of seamen who were not to be found at Cadiz ; and these troops are said to have been forced, much against the inclination of both officers and men, to embark in the night before the fleet sailed. These ships being in quarantine, and the not having any good interpreters, makes it very difficult to obtain any satisfactory information respecting them.

I have the honour to be . . .

W. YOUNG.

¹ Commander-in-Chief at Plymouth.

² One of Calder's prizes.

*Sir Robert Calder to Lord Barham**[Holograph.]*Prince of Wales, off Ushant,
17th August, 1805.

My Lord,—Since my arrival off here I have received the board's approbation, with the commander in chief's, of my conduct, as well as that of Rear-Admiral Stirling's, the captains, officers and men serving under my command, in obtaining the victory over the combined squadrons on the 22nd July. I have communicated the same to Rear-Admiral Stirling and the captains. I must now, my lord, beg leave to express my hopes that your lordship will recommend some mark of royal favour to be conferred on Rear-Admiral Stirling and Captain Cuming of the Prince of Wales; this has generally been done on similar occasions. I am further led to hope the lieutenants and midshipmen on board the different ships may have some promotion given to them. This, be assured, my lord, must have a very good effect in reviving the spirits of the navy and to excite emulation; and will make your lordship very popular in the service.

I perceive the board have not judged it advisable to publish all¹ my public letter in the Gazette. This has led I perceive the papers and the world to bestow on me many remarks, and to publish a great deal of nonsense; but this I must put up with. I find I am likely to be again detached by Admiral Cornwallis. I must, therefore, beg leave to put myself in your lordship's hands as one of my oldest friends, and in whose hands I am sure to be safe. I pledge myself to your lordship that everything was done that it was possible

¹ See *post*, p. 271.

with the combined squadrons ; and my situation was critical in the extreme from the Ferrol and Rochefort squadrons, after the action, with the wind then easterly.

I have the honour . . .

[*Holograph.*]

Prince of Wales, off Cadiz,
22nd September, 1805.

My Lord,—Yesterday I was honoured (by the *Nautilus*) with your two letters of the 2nd and 19th August, for which I beg you to accept my best thanks, and your lordship may be assured I feel your condescension in writing them, as I ought to do. Your lordship knows I have been absent from England on service ever since the account of the victory I obtained over a very superior enemy arrived in England ; consequently I know little or nothing of what is passing there, further than I perceived by the newspapers that *John Bull* thought I might have done more ; but I never dreamt that any prejudices could have gone forth so as to have in any manner affected my character as an officer or as a man, in not having brought the enemy to action on the succeeding day, after the victory I had obtained over them. Having now obtained this information from a quarter not to be doubted, I must request of your lordship and the board to cause an enquiry to be made into my conduct upon that or any other day, by the officers of the Channel fleet where I was serving, or in any other manner your lordship and the board may judge best for his Majesty's service. And that the Prince of Wales and *Sirius*, now here, may be ordered back to Ushant, or England, to attend the same, with as many of the ships as were under my orders in the action, that the nature of our service will admit

of ; in particular I could wish to have the Windsor Castle, Thunderer, Ajax, Agamemnon, Hero, Repulse, Defiance and Triumph. But if the exigencies of the service will not permit of all these ships to be present, I must submit to have only those that can be assembled without prejudice to the service.

My lord, now permit me to say I have most seriously considered and weighed all this matter, and I have here given your lordship my sentiments most fully thereon, agreeable to your lordship's most friendly advice. I feel myself very much flattered by your lordship's good opinion, and I have no doubts of my removing the many illiberal charges that have been made against my character. At the same time I am fully aware that courts martial never did any officer any good in the public opinion, and that it is only a necessary evil that we are obliged to have recourse to. Having had the honour of being known to you ever since you commanded a frigate in the West Indies, since which I have frequently received from you marks of attention, and I have ever considered your lordship as my oldest and best friend I now therefore crave leave to put myself into your hands as such, and under your lordship's kind protection.

As soon as ever I know your lordship's and the board's determination upon this business, and you will be pleased to signify to me the public letter you would recommend for me to address to the board, I shall do it directly through the Hon. Admiral Cornwallis, the commander-in-chief under whose orders I was then serving.

I have the honour . . .

Prince of Wales, off Cadiz,
30th September, 1805.

[Holograph.]

My Lord,—Yesterday I was honoured with your letters by Lord Nelson, and he delivered to me your lordship's kind message. I feel myself much flattered by these marks of your lordship's true friendship. I have here the honour to enclose, agreeable to your lordship's opinion, a public letter addressed to Mr. Marsden, requesting an enquiry into my conduct in such manner as your lordship and the board shall judge best, and I must beg your lordship will be pleased to cause the said letter to be laid before the board. I trust I shall soon be at Portsmouth, when I hope to have this very unpleasant business settled and as soon as circumstances will permit it.

If the enquiry is granted, I shall be compelled to call upon most of the captains who were with me in the action, in order to refute the malicious reports and to clear my character from all and every suspicion. With respect to what I have seen in the papers as to what Lieut. Nicholson should have said, I can only say it is erroneous in almost every particular ; and false that I ever said I would or that I could bring the enemy to action, then or at any time. Believe me, my lord, I am not in the habit of telling officers what are my private intentions, in service ; and much less to a lieutenant of a cutter, who was so little known to me.

As I had the honour to write you in the first instance, I here again pledge myself to your lordship, that everything was done on my part that it was possible for me to have done as an officer, from the existing circumstances and from the critical situation in which I was placed, as well as from the orders I was under.

I beg leave here to state to your lordship, that

it is not only the omission of the word 'decided,' as you mention in your letter to me; but there is a large part of my letter omitted; and with all due deference to your lordship, I have ever understood it to be the custom of government to call it an *Extract*, when the whole of an officer's letter was not published. But I stand corrected if I am wrong. I have taken the liberty to enclose your lordship a copy of the part omitted to which I allude.¹

I have the honour . . .

[Holograph.]

No. 3 Cook Street,
28th November, 1805.

My Lord,—I was only yesterday honoured with your truly friendly letter of the 30th September, for which accept my heartfelt thanks. I had, as your lordship knows, fully complied with your directions therein, prior to the date of your letter; and I hope and trust I shall fully make it appear, not only to your lordship but also to my king and country, that no blame has ever been attached to my conduct during my blockade of Ferrol for so many months, when so critically situated, with surrounding enemies of so superior numbers. When my enquiry is finished, I trust I shall have every marked approbation conferred upon me that any officer before me has had, for obtaining a complete victory over so superior an enemy. I am perfectly satisfied I shall have your lordship's support on this occasion; and I am led to hope for those² who have hitherto not known the true state of the circumstances and difficulties which I had to contend against, as well as the danger I

¹ The extract enclosed is a copy of *Blockade of Brest*, ii. 312, from 'At the same time,' &c., to 'private information,' on p. 313.

² So in MS. The meaning evidently is 'for [that of] those.'

must have exposed my squadron to, as also the country, if I had madly and rashly done what John Bull seems to have wished me to have done, and this without knowing if it was, or was not, in my power to do.

I have the honour . . .

I leave town to-morrow morning for a few days. I am going down to my house at The Holt, Bishop's Waltham, Hants.

R. C.

Sir Robert Calder was tried by court-martial on 23-26 December, and severely reprimanded. His defence is printed in *Blockade of Brest*, ii. 372. Mr. Corbett's excellent discussion of the whole question (*Campaign of Trafalgar*, 205 *seq.*) emphasises the significance of the fact that 'between the action and the court martial, Nelson fought and won Trafalgar.' Calder was a good, commonplace officer, and was tried according to a standard of which he had no conception.

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. JAMES

Whether this memorandum emanated from Barham is, and must remain doubtful. It is in Thomson's writing, and is bound up with official papers also in Thomson's writing, many of which are corrected in Barham's hand. The paper on which it is written has no water-mark; there is no date, and no clue to the identity of Mr. James. If the author of the *Naval History* is meant, then Barham had nothing to do with the paper; for William James was settled in Jamaica, and did not return to England till after Barham's death, nor begin the *Naval History* till several years later. On the other hand, the story given in the *Naval History* does not appear to derive its origin from this paper, from which it differs in many details, and adds an unfavourable comment on Barham's strategy.

When the change of administration took place in 1804 and Mr. Pitt was again at the head of H.M. Government, it was determined by Mr. Pitt and Lord Melville, now placed at the head of the admiralty, to consult Sir Charles Middleton on all matters connected with the restoration of the fleet, which was found, on the renewal of hostilities in 1803, to be in a very dilapidated state. Among other measures resorted to for the purpose of obtaining a sufficient force to oppose the united navies of France, Spain and Holland, it was determined, in the early part of 1805, to bring forward for immediate service a number of those ships which had been laid up in ordinary, and considered unfit for actual service until they had undergone a thorough repair. The method adopted was that of strengthening some of these by diagonal beams, doubling others, and applying both these methods to some of those in the worst condition, as recommended by Mr. Snodgrass, the surveyor of the E.I. Co. in a public letter addressed to Lord Melville as president of the board of control and the court of directors in 1797.

The ships thus rendered efficient consisted of

3 ships of 98 guns	{ Prince George, Formidable, London.
3 ships of 80 guns	{ Caesar, Pompée, Gibraltar.
11 ships of 74 guns	{ Edgar, Zealous, Captain, Resolution, Canada, Bellona, Audacious, Powerful, Thun- derer, Ganges, Majestic.
5 ships of 64 guns	{ Nassau, Dictator, Africa, Belli- queux, Stately.
11 frigates ;	

and if reference is had to the annual list of the navy, it will be found that several of them were not only actively employed in the course of the

same summer and autumn,¹ and that the *Caesar* bore the broad pennant of Sir R. Strachan; but indeed without this resource, it is quite evident that the navy of England was completely outnumbered by those of the belligerent powers with which she had to contend; and it is equally clear that without this addition of effective ships (even considering these ships as only adapted for home or Channel service), that neither Sir Robert Calder's action, the splendid victory off Trafalgar, the valiant achievement of Sir Richard Strachan, nor Sir J. Duckworth's brilliant action off San Domingo—by which the enemy lost, in the short space of six months, 31 sail of the line, 5 frigates and 5 corvettes—could have been attained.

Some circumstances connected with the first of these actions—that of Sir Robert Calder—may be worthy of recording. Captain Bettsworth of the *Curieux* brig, dispatched by Lord Nelson with an account of the combined French and Spanish squadrons having passed Antigua, supposed to be in their way to Europe, and which was confirmed by Captain Bettsworth having descried and counted them in the latitude of Bermuda on his passage to England, arrived at a late hour of night. Orders were immediately sent to Admiral Cornwallis, then in command of the Channel fleet, to recall [Rear-] Admiral Stirling from the blockade of Rochefort and to join Sir Robert Calder off Ferrol with all possible dispatch; Sir Robert Calder being also directed to stretch a certain distance to the westward of Cape Finisterre with the united force thus put under his orders, whilst Admiral Cornwallis, with the main body of the Channel fleet, then employed in the blockade of Brest, was ordered to cruise half way between

¹ The *Africa* had a distinguished part at Trafalgar.

Ushant and Cape Finisterre, with the view of intercepting the combined fleet should they escape Sir Robert Calder, and be destined for any port in the Bay of Biscay. These orders were issued and subsequently obeyed with such admirable promptitude that Sir R. Calder, after being joined by Admiral Stirling's squadron from off Rochefort, was not only enabled to reach his destination, but was actually a week there before the combined fleet made their appearance.

LORD BARHAM TO CORNWALLIS ¹

[Autograph; press copy.] Admiralty. 16th August, 1805.

Dear Sir,—Having just received the [enclosed] from the chairman of the East [India] Company, I [send] it for your information; and as you will naturally have frigates watching the French ships, you may probably have it in your power to [detach] a force equal to theirs, in case they should have heard of the expected arrival of this fleet and send anything [in hopes to] intercept them. They will have two [ships of the line and] a frigate with them. Send back the papers at your leisure.

Yours sincerely,

BARHAM.

ENCLOSURE

Charles Grant ² to Lord Barham

India House. 16th August, 1805.

My dear Lord,—Notwithstanding the trouble I gave your lordship yesterday on the subject of

¹ So endorsed by Thomson.

² M.P. for Inverness-shire, and Chairman of the East India Company.

the company's fleet expected from St. Helena, I find it necessary, having since had the secret letter from St. Helena deciphered, to submit to your lordship an extract from that letter, by which you will judge of the great number and value of the company's ships which would be collected at the island, and will also see the line by which Admiral Rainier, who would have the fleet under his convoy, intended to shape his course homeward. The value which will be at stake in the fleet being so immense, and the enemy having now so large a naval force at Ferrol, to which our ships will be exposed, I earnestly hope your lordship notwithstanding the numerous calls upon you, may be able to afford the India fleet an effectual protection when it approaches the shores of Europe.

I have the honour to be with the greatest respect and attachment . . .

CHA. GRANT.

Admiral Cornwallis to Lord Barham

25th August, 1805.

Dear Lord Barham,—I have had the honour of receiving your lordship's letter in which you approve of the detachment which I made as soon as Lord Nelson's ships came. The Dragon has since joined, without falling in with Sir Robert Calder, which I am sorry for. I expect very soon to hear from him and then to know where any reinforcement may fall in with him. The ships at Brest, I should suppose by their movements, wish to get to sea, and I should not be at all surprised if their object was to endeavour to intercept our homeward-bound convoys. We had a near view of them the other day and they seemed to be

as well as French ships in general are. I apprehend by the account which I have transmitted to the board from Captain Griffith, that the Rochefort ships are still at sea.

Some water and victualling vessels are now with us. I send the confidential papers your lordship was pleased to entrust me with, and I have the honour to be with the greatest respect,

Dear Lord Barham,

Your Lordship's most obedient,
humble servant,

W. CORNWALLIS.

P.S.—It has been very calm of late and I have not been able to stand in again.

Lord Barham to Admiral Cornwallis

[Autograph; press copy.]

Admiralty. 28th August, 1805.

My dear Sir,—As the East and West India fleets expected within these ten days are of the immense value of ten millions, and we have no certainty of the Rochefort fleet being in port or at sea, and as we are hurrying out the ships with every degree of possible dispatch to join you, I wish you may be able to contrive it so as to spare four ships and a frigate to cruise in the chops of the Channel for about ten days, for the preservation of these convoys, and take such other measures as may appear to you to be best to ensuring this object.

The India convoy will have two 64s accompanying them, and I trust Sir Robert will take care to keep between them and the French squadron. The safety of these fleets must be our first object, and as soon as they have got within the Channel we shall be able to make you strong in all quarters.

You may probably be able to stand out for a very short time to the westward yourself, but this must depend upon information ; I therefore leave the whole to your management, being,

My dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

BARHAM.

P.S.—You will be so good as to enforce to the commanders of detached squadrons, to send frequently every kind of intelligence relative to the service they are upon.

[Autograph ; press copy.¹
Fragment.]

[? 28th August, 1805.]

[Bonaparte's threats to lead his army]² into Germany makes it necessary [for them] to attempt an invasion now or never. Your [appearing]³ off Brest will convince them that no assistance can [reach them] from thence ; and from [the] accounts we have received from their combined squadrons, they have not yet been [fitting] in port, nor received either stores or refitments. It is also supposed that the Spanish detachment got into Ferrol, and that the French are still out ; but of this we may expect certain advice soon from

¹ Very much faded and in part obliterated. The blanks have been filled in by conjecture—sometimes, but not always, assisted by possible traces.

² For nearly a month Napoleon had been publishing in the *Moniteur* articles 'les plus menaçants.' On the 12th he had written to it,—'qu'il allait lever ses camps de l'Océan et faire entrer ses troupes en Suisse.' On the 23rd he proposed to 'make my 200,000 men pirouette into Germany.' The march seems to have actually begun on the 29th. See Lanfrey, *Histoire de Napoleon I.* iii. 299 ; Rose, *Life of Napoleon*, ii. 18.

³ This can only refer to the skirmish of the 22nd August, and Cornwallis's dispatch of that date. See *Blockade of Brest*, ii. 350. James (*Naval History*, iii. 313) makes a good deal more of it.

Sir Robert Calder [by] the Nimble. The spring tides have passed without the Dutch having been able to get out; they too have been [ready, waiting], and our squadron anchored without them.

I hope you will not risk an action under their batteries,¹ as the disabling of your masts and rigging, without injuring them, would have very bad consequences at the present moment. I hope by this time the Glory and Windsor Castle² have joined you, and, if I judge right, two if not three more will be with you this week or the beginning of next.

We very much approve of your sending Sir Robert Calder so early to Ferrol,³ and which our Indiamen [will be glad of].

[*The rest is missing.*]

[*Autograph; press copy.*] Admiralty. 11th October, 1805.

Dear Sir,—I could wish you very much to keep a squadron to the westward in order if possible to intercept this Rochefort one, and to continue on that service till you hear of their return into port. They seem to keep on the very west of our home-ward-bound trade; and from their having a ship in tow I conclude they must be pointing homeward. We have been very unfortunate in not falling in with this squadron and it is a miracle they have not done us more injury. There is

¹ See, *ante*, p. 278 n. 3.

² The Windsor Castle sailed from Cawsand Bay on the 22nd August and joined Cornwallis on the 25th. The Glory left on the 24th and joined on the 27th.

³ This is the movement which, as it interfered with his plans, Napoleon denounced as an 'insigne bêtise,' and which some English writers, accepting Napoleon's good faith, have described as 'a strategical blunder.' We may believe Cornwallis and Barham judged the situation better, and the result proved they were correct.

however a Jamaica fleet still expected, and the ships convoying the Leeward Island trade have not yet entered the Channel. If more ships are necessary to make up for what you detach, we can send you the *Powerful* and *Athénien*¹ at a moment's notice. Of this you will inform me by an early notice. My wish is that every commanding officer should know how the ships are disposed of in his neighbourhood, which probably occasioned your having a duplicate when the general ones were dispatched.

Yours sincerely,
BARHAM.

As the attention of the enemy is now employed on the continent, I hope you may be enabled to keep some of your heavy frigates to the westward.

Admiral Cornwallis to Lord Barham

17th October, 1805.

Dear Lord Barham,—I have had the honour to receive your lordship's letter, dated the 11th instant. The *Powerful* and *Athénien* would enable me to send in ships to be paid more frequently. Your lordship may be assured that I shall pay every attention to what has been stated in your letter, and endeavour to carry on the service according to your wishes. The weather has been so bad, with constant changes of wind, which has prevented my running over to Falmouth as I had intended.

I have the honour to be . . .

¹ A 64-gun ship which fell into our possession when Valetta surrendered.

Ville de Paris : at Sea. 31st October, 1805.

Dear Lord Barham,—If the intercourse with which I have been honoured formerly by your lordship could be forgotten, I should from recent events be induced to believe that I am in your way here, and that you would prefer some other arrangement. A statesman in your high post, unacquainted with the service, might, with the best intentions, have been led away. But when I consider your lordship's high character and long experience in different departments of the naval service, I could not for a moment have imagined that a flag officer, in great nominal command (at least), would have been permitted to continue, if it was not meant to afford him your countenance. I can assure your lordship that I never had any particular partiality for this employment. The manner in which I was twice called to it by a great sea officer, was all that was flattering to me ; it has been considered as the direct road to preferment by those in command as well as those of all the inferior ranks serving in the ship. The directing me to confine nearly the whole of the ships and vessels under my orders to the blockade, and supplying an admiral in port with cruisers to be sent upon what has always been considered belonging to this station, must, of course, lower my consequence ; and I should fear this and other restraints put upon me of late, will frustrate my chief object—that of serving the country in the best manner I am able, which prompted my offer of service to any part of the world at the commencement of the war. The public service, my lord, should be the first consideration, and I do not really believe you have been accustomed to think emolument mine. If it had, I should have put myself in

the way of it at a time of life when money might be considered of some value.

It hath been usual, I believe, for two sets of lieutenants to have been promoted from the commander-in-chief's ship, during the period I have been serving here—but it is not confined to those and midshipmen; there are many others who have cherished, as they thought, a just claim. The chaplain, Mr. Morgan, has served very long with commanders-in-chief, here and in the Mediterranean, with the best character. Dr. Kein, the surgeon, has done the duty of physician to the fleet, visiting the ships of the squadron at all times. The master, Mr. Goodridge, has also had his share of additional duty and is very deserving. Mr. Clark has examined into defects in other ships, and attended repairs greatly to the benefit of the service. The gentleman who has served me as secretary, Mr. Evans, was, by some jumble three years ago, put out of the ship he was purser of; he is not desirous of returning, but I should hope your lordship might find some moderate appointment for him in a dockyard, for which he is well qualified.

The whole of the officers of this ship have had more sea duty than any others; and if those who embarked with me at first are not promoted, they might have been better off in private ships, and have served with the commander-in-chief to their loss. Your lordship will have the goodness to excuse the length of this letter, and will, I have no doubt, admit that I could not avoid troubling you with this statement.

I have the honour to be, with great respect,
your lordship's most obedient, humble servant,

W. CORNWALLIS.

Lord Barham to Admiral Cornwallis

[Autograph; press copy.] Admiralty. 7th November, 1805.

My dear Sir,—I can with truth declare to you that my confidence and regard for you is in no degree diminished; but you must be aware of the difficulties I am under, from the habits that have been established and commands fixed before my return to the board; and although many of them do, in no shape, meet with my approbation, yet it is out of my power to make a direct attack upon them. On the subject of port admirals having cruisers at their disposal beyond a few convoys and advice boats, I totally disapprove of it, and have begun to draw off the king's ships and to put them under the cruising admirals, and shall continue it, if I live to finish the various regulations which I have in hand. These things require time and perseverance, but I am not without hopes that they may be accomplished. The station you are in is certainly the command of the first importance of any in the line of the profession in this country, but the circumstances of invasion has made such a change in the disposition of our ships that it became necessary to break it into several commands. From the present view of things, it will probably change again, but in what manner, I cannot yet foresee. But the principle I lay down is, that as soon as we can command security at home and abroad from our line of battleships, the Atlantic should be covered with cruisers and particularly from the Western squadron and Cork.

With regard to patronage the service has become too extensive to make it any longer an object; and I declare to you that since my coming to this board, I have made but one master and

commander; and when I read over the claims before me,—from admirals and captains for their children, from the king's ministers, members of parliament, peers, eminent [*illegible*], I do not see when I am to make another. Under these circumstances it is impossible that any person in my situation should give satisfaction. If I steer clear of injustice I shall think myself fortunate. To conclude, in all matters of patronage, I execute it as I would any other duty belonging to the office, I hope with impartiality. As to yourself, I can only repeat what I have said before, that you have my unreserved confidence and good wishes, and am very truly,

My dear Sir, yours sincerely,

BARHAM.

Our success at Cadiz has been very great, abating the loss of poor Nelson. We have been very unlucky in not crossing upon this Rochefort squadron, and I have still hopes of Sir J. Strachan's finding them.

[*Autograph; press copy.*] Admiralty. 13th November, 1805.

My dear Sir,—You will observe by the recent promotion that the red flag stops with you, and on which I congratulate you, as well as on our late successes. I am still anxious about the Rochefort squadron and am hurrying Sir John Strachan as much as possible that he may rejoin you. When he does so, or you are able to detach 5 ships, I could very much wish you would do so. If Vice-Admiral Douglas was not in so large a ship as the *Hibernia*, I could wish him to have his turn in these detached services; and as soon as we can get Admiral

Collingwood's ships replaced, and your fleet in proper strength, I would propose a sufficient number of ships to be appropriated to such ports as may contain the enemies' ships, but not to appear too near and on no account to hazard them too far in. By showing occasionally a line of battle ship while the body of the squadron is at a due distance, and at other times a frigate, encouragement will be given to the enemy to put to sea, and without hazard of escaping to do us mischief. This is the best plan I can think of under present circumstances and I hope you will agree with me in adopting it. The frigates under Sir John Strachan are ordered to join you; and I remain, my dear Sir, . . .

Sir Thomas Graves being promoted will of course leave the Foudroyant vacant, and she will continue so in the interim, under the command of Captain J. E. Douglas, who was intended to be Vice-Admiral Douglas's captain. This will enable you to allow him to hoist his flag in the Foudroyant when you detach him from the fleet, and return or not to the Hibernia as you see proper.

SIR RICHARD J. STRACHAN TO BARHAM

[Holograph.]

Cæsar : Hamoaze.

16th November, 1805.

My Lord,—I am much gratified by your lordship's kind approval of my conduct, and notwithstanding I am full of awful gratitude to Heaven for having placed this squadron¹ in our

¹ Dumanoir's four ships, escaping from Trafalgar, captured by Strachan on 4th November. No copy of Barham's letter, here referred to, has been preserved. Cf. *Blockade of Brest*, ii. 369.

way, I feel a regret that we did not fall in with the Rochefort squadron.¹ It would have been so pleasing to the country to have had a French three-decked ship brought in with her squadron, which had done so much mischief. It is probable they got into Ferrol on the 17th October. They certainly were not far off from us on the 15th; but seeing our lights and signals off Vigo, I think they bore away with their prizes for Ferrol. Lord William Fitzroy had seen them on the 15th in the afternoon, steering for Vigo, about ten leagues off; we were in a line with it, about six leagues off; the weather thick, rainy, and wind SW. Ferrol was afterwards reconnoitred by the *Æolus*, and a large ship, painted as the French are, seen in the harbour, and one at Corunna. It is difficult to see all the ships at Ferrol. At Vigo the French have a ship of the line and the Spaniards two, and two frigates.

I have been told by Admiral Young that Sir Thomas Graves is going to leave the *Foudroyant*. As the masts of the *Cæsar* are to be shifted and all the rigging, if it does not interfere with your lordship's arrangements, my wishes to get to sea would be sooner gratified by being permitted to hoist my flag in the *Foudroyant*. It is only with this consideration I make the request, for I feel all the regret that can be imagined at the thoughts of leaving the *Cæsar*'s people; but the hope of being able to perform some further service does away with every other consideration.

I have the honour to be . . .

RICHARD J. STRACHAN.

¹ It was to look for this that he was detached by Cornwallis on 29th October.

[Holograph.]

London. 30th November, 1805.

My Lord,—I think I mentioned to your lordship that a letter which I had some time ago written to you had been by mistake put up in a packet which I sent to Admiral Cornwallis, and that I was unconscious of this till the letter was returned to me, and arrived in the Foudroyant. It is not of any consequence, but as I think I either mentioned the subject to your lordship or Admiral Gambier, and the letter being in my possession, I take the liberty to send it, and to apologise to your lordship for the negligence of the person, which has caused it to be kept so long from you. I cannot close this letter without again congratulating your lordship on the success of his Majesty's navy under your auspicious government.

I have the honour to be . . .

RICHARD J. STRACHAN.

[Holograph.]

[? 16th December, 1805.]

My Lord,—Having some communication this morning with Captain Blackwood, I find the two ships we saw to windward on the night of the 2nd (3rd by log)² November were Boadicea and Dryad. The story is as follows: The Boadicea and Dryad saw a squadron in the night of the 3rd (by log), at 11 o'clock, which, not answering the private signal, they took to be the Rochefort squadron, and communicated their suspicions to the Defiance, from whose captain, Captain Blackwood had the above intelligence. I have no doubt of these being the two ships we saw to windward, and Captain Baker³ said, 'he observed these two

¹ Captain Blackwood seems to have come to town on or about the 14th.

² *Sc.* by sea reckoning.

³ Thomas Baker, died, vice-admiral and K.C.B., in 1845.

ships while the French chased him, to be at some distance from them, and not as if the same squadron.' I hasten to give your lordship this intelligence to relieve your mind from the idea of the Rochefort squadron having been seen about that time by these frigates; your lordship will perceive that it was our squadron the *Boadicea* and *Dryad* saw. I have the honour to be . . .

RICHARD J. STRACHAN.

ADMIRAL CORNWALLIS TO LORD BARHAM

21st November.

Dear Lord Barham,—I have had the honour to receive your lordship's letters: I should have been very glad to have detached Vice-Admiral Douglas in August, if I had thought it would have been approved; but the ship, having the officers of another admiral, and all things considered, I rather suspected it was intended that he should remain with us; but your lordship may be assured I shall pay every attention to the hint you have given.

I certainly consider the flag,¹ which you mention to have come down to me, as an attention and civility. Some people value such things more than others; if I was a dozen years younger, I would rather be a senior captain than have a flag of any kind.

Vice-Admiral Nugent is tired of his situation—which I supposed he would be—and writes to resign—which I have not the smallest objection should take place. I have very lately sent two frigates in the direction your lordship was pleased to mention; we have unluckily many in port at

¹ Red at the main. Cf. *Blockade of Brest*, ii. 369.

present. The easterly winds which are inclined to last much longer, I fear, prevents my going anywhere for supplies and we are getting very low.

I have the honour to be,

Dear Lord Barham,

With great respect . . .

Lord Barham to Admiral Cornwallis

[Autograph; press copy.¹] Admiralty. 27th November, 1805.

Dear Sir,—By the enclosed intelligence, the Rochefort squadron was certainly at sea on the 2nd,² and not far distant from Cape Finisterre; I am fearful therefore lest their design should be to intercept our disabled ships as they come home from Gibraltar. I could therefore very much wish you would risk sending immediately a squadron of eight ships,³ including one three-decker, and direct them to cruise for 10 days off Cape Finisterre, in hopes of meeting the Rochefort ships, and affording protection to any single ships of our own coming from Gibraltar. By the end of ten days our single ships will have past; and by sending eight ships instead of five, they will be equal to the enemy in case they should be joined by the 3 ships from Vigo. Sir John Strachan's ships are ordered to join you with all possible dispatch and may be expected within the week. I don't apprehend any danger from the Brest squadron during the short absence of our ships, and particularly as they can have no object at this season of the year, all circumstances considered.

I think Admiral Douglas may be sent on this service and am, dear Sir, . . .

¹ There is also a rough autograph copy.

² The rough copy has '3rd.' Cf. p. 287.

³ In the rough copy, 'five' was first written, and deleted.

Lord Barham to (?) Admiral Young

[Autograph; press copy.] Admiralty. 27th November, 1805.

Dear Sir,—I enclose a letter to Admiral Cornwallis which requires dispatch; I must therefore beg you will send it by any conveyance within your reach and hasten Sir John Strachan's ships as much as the weather will admit. You may expect soon a detachment from the fleet off Cadiz which will enable us to man the line of battle ships at your port.

Lord Barham to Admiral Cornwallis

[Autograph; press copy.] Admiralty. 27th November, 1805.

Dear Sir,—I had wrote you a considerable long letter on the subject of the Rochefort squadron having been seen off Cape Finisterre on the 3rd, and which made me fearful for the safety of the Victory and Belleisle, who was coming home single from Cadiz. The remaining six will come together. What I proposed in consequence of that information must be now postponed, as from the intelligence received, and which accompanies this, your attention will naturally be engaged in preventing or intercepting, as far as you are able, this squadron of Bonaparte's.

The ships under Sir J. Strachan are ordered to join you with every degree of dispatch; and as soon as the crippled ships are arrived, you may look for fresh ships to enable you to recruit what you are short of provisions and water. I heartily wish you success and shall be very happy when it is in my power to give you ships enough to keep a

squadron to the westward of you, and which I do not despair of in a short time.

I am, dear Sir,

Very sincerely yours,

BARHAM.

Admiral Nugent has leave to come on shore.

Admiral Cornwallis to Lord Barham

4th December, 1805.

Dear Lord Barham,—I had the honour of receiving your lordship's letter of the 27th ultimo. I apprehend the intended expedition from Brest was planned before the defeat off Cadiz was known—the information is a month old, if not more. Your lordship may be assured that I shall take all possible care to watch that port. I should have thought if the ships at Brest were meant to be sent out, they could not have had any object more inducing than the intercepting our disabled ships, or the prizes; many opportunities of wind and weather have offered.

No information has been sent to me of the line of battle ships or any other having sailed from L'Orient. I have frigates upon that part of the coast.

I should hope, my lord, an establishment at Falmouth might favour the pretensions of my secretary and some of the officers of the ship in that line of service. Vice-Admiral Nugent returns to port by this conveyance.

I have the honour to be, . . .

W. CORNWALLIS.

*Continuation of Communications, &c., from the
Western Departments*

Brest. 4th December, 1805.

The division of eleven line of battle ships proposed to have sailed¹ under the orders of Vice-Admiral Gantheaume, is actually reduced to eight in number, being the only few, after an inspection, found in a state to undertake the distant expedition they were intended for; it appears even now doubted whether it will take place at all; all the auxiliary officers being ordered to be dismissed, is considered here as the first steps of a general disarmament, although the stock of biscuit continues to be collected. Since the action of Trafalgar, of which it is strictly forbidden by the police to speak, the greatest consternation prevails among the seafaring part of the community, who declare, '*la partie pas tenable*.'

The conscripts of these departments, although urged by the administrations and clergy, by every plausible argument founded on the falsest and the most vaunting relations of the success of the armies, avail themselves of every expedient their dislike can suggest to delay and prolong their departure, which many contrive to elude altogether.

St. Maloes. 14th December.

The frigate *la Piémontaise*, that had been announced as disposed to depart for the East Indies, is detained by the desertion of a great part of her crew;² but the *Minerve* has escaped

¹ This is presumably the division of eleven ships which did actually sail on the 13th. See next page.

² The delay was but short. She sailed on her celebrated cruise before the end of the month.

from Cherbourg and proceeded to her destination. Notwithstanding every precaution of the police, accounts of the disastrous effects of the battles in the early days of the month, on the plains of Moravia, circulate, and a gloomy consternation is seen on all faces—particularly among the administrations of the imperial police.

Jersey, 24th December, 1805.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR VICE-ADMIRAL
SIR J. B. WARREN

[Draft.¹]

25th December, 1805.

Whereas a French squadron, said to consist of seven sail of the line² and four frigates, supposed to have sailed from Brest on the 13th inst., were seen next day (the 14th) about the lat. of 48° 30' N, and longitude 7° W, steering WSW or W by S, with the wind at [*blank*], and there is reason to suppose that their design may be against one or more of our West India Islands: You are hereby directed to proceed, without a moment's loss of time, with the ships named in the margin [Foudroyant, London, Namur, Courageux, Hero, Illustrious, Ramillies, Canada, Repulse, at St. Helens], to the island of Madeira, off which island you may expect to meet the Raven brig, detached from Plymouth for intelligence, and whose commander has directions to look out for your approach and to follow your orders for his further proceedings. In the event of your not meeting the Raven there, you are to send in one of your own

¹ In Thomson's hand, with corrections by Barham. There is an earlier and less perfect draft written altogether by Barham.

² There were, in fact, eleven sail of the line, four frigates, and three small craft. See James, iv. 87; Chevalier, iii. 246.

frigates or small vessels to H.M. Consul, for such intelligence as he may be able to give you.

If the information you may receive by the time of your arrival at Madeira does not very substantially controvert the supposition of the enemy's being gone to the West Indies, you are immediately to make the best of your way to the island of Barbados, where you may expect to find Rear-Admiral Cochrane with the Northumberland and Ajax, and where you will be guided by the information you may receive. But if the enemy have not made their appearance among the islands, and on consultation with the rear-admiral, you have reason to consider that quarter in a state of safety, you are to proceed without delay with the ¹ and the frigates, &c. attached to your own squadron, to the island of Jamaica, leaving Rear-Admiral Cochrane what is necessary for the command of the Windward and Leeward Islands. On your arrival at Jamaica you will * consult with [Rear] Admiral Dacres on the state of that island; and, if not in danger from immediate attack, to leave with him such a force as may be sufficient for its security and return to Spithead with the remainder.²

Lord Barham to Admiral Cornwallis

[Autograph; press copy.] Admiralty. 25th December, 1805.

My dear Sir,—My mind is made easy by a return of the Rochefort squadron which was certainly seen by the Alcène and Loire from the 13th to the 16th, steering for Cape Finisterre. As this

¹ Omitted, on beginning a new page.

² From * on to the end is a correction, written in Barham's own hand.

intelligence leaves us at a certainty with regard to the Cape of Good Hope, and that the seven sail which left Brest on the 13th is not like to be joined by any other ships, Sir John B. Warren will be sufficiently strong for any service he may meet with at the Islands or Jamaica. He has just received his orders and sets out this evening; the ships whose names are enclosed is the squadron put under his command.

What the object can be that has made the French risk seven sail of the line while we had so

[a sheet is missing]

be employed in the same way to counteract them and I would hope get possession of them.

The ships I have most immediately in my eye are those from Rochefort, Ferrol and Vigo, and which if suffered to range the sea in small numbers may do us an infinite mischief if not guarded against and which can only be done by blockade or cruising superior to them in numbers. We have never yet been able to fix the Rochefort squadron which might easily have intercepted our returning disabled ships if they had been so inclined. That hazard is now past and we shall refit them as fast as possible so as to enable you to detach in small numbers and in several squadrons. These squadrons besides looking into Ferrol and Vigo occasionally must follow the enemy wherever they are heard of and be kept in the best sailing trim as to provisions and stores.

I am glad you have been at Falmouth as I hope it may prove a useful assistant to Plymouth and Torbay. We have ordered a telegraph from Plymouth to Falmouth which must prove very convenient. I am sorry it is not in my power to serve your recommendations. Dockyard appointments

are almost totally confined to people bred in the yard and happen so seldom, that my lists are running over and without a single vacancy since I have been at the board. The naval officer now acting was taken from Sheerness to assist the board of revisal, and intended in Lord Melville's time for the first civil place in preference to all others. The gentlemen you recommend are entered in my book, but this is a subject that gives no satisfaction to anyone; and to me, who wish to do justice to all, it is a most tormenting one. To vacancies abroad, I can sometimes appoint and serve individuals, but at home it is hopeless.

Vice-Admiral Douglas seemed to fear that by going out in a two-decked ship, I meant to take the *Hibernia* from him. Such an intention never entered my head.

I remain, my dear Sir, faithfully yours,

BARHAM.

[Autograph; press copy.] Admiralty. 27th December, 1805.

Dear Sir,—I enclose for your consideration an outline of my ideas concerning the fleet you command, and I shall be glad if you will offer considerations and suggest anything that may occur to you to add or diminish. It is to little purpose for us to harass our officers and men and wear out our ships in a fruitless blockade during the winter. I hope you have not detached after the Brest squadron, as we have provided for that service and very much want the ships we have desired you to send in. They are to escort the trade and cruise afterwards.

Yours sincerely,

BARHAM.

You will return the sketch.

Mr. Pitt to Lord Barham

[Chatham Papers, 111.]

[? 27th December, 1805.]

Mr. Pitt wishes Lord Barham to consider whether it might not be expedient to direct Sir J. Warren to proceed to the Cape Verd, and if he there found that Sir J. Duckworth was gone to the West Indies, but not upon certain information of the enemy having preceded him, that Sir J. W. should be ordered to go on to the Cape, unless he received intelligence that the enemy had taken another course.

This suggestion arises out of the intelligence received from the Cape, of the nature of the defence the governor means to make, and the expectation that a body of French troops was expected there. In this case the operation on shore may be protracted in its nature and admit of the arrival of a superior naval force.

It is presumed Sir J. W. might return in five months, that is by the 1st June; before which time it is not probable the arrangements for invasion can be far advanced.

Lord Barham to (?) Mr. Pitt

[Autograph; press copy.] Admiralty. 27th December, 1805.

My dear Sir,—I send you a short sketch for a disposition of the Western squadron for the winter, and which with cruising squads¹ will be more likely to reduce the Brest fleet than a fruitless endeavour of keeping them in port. At Ferrol and Cadiz it is practicable and ought to be continued, but not so at Brest and Rochefort.

¹ This word seems peculiar, but it is plainly written.

As soon as our disabled ships can be brought forward we shall be able to cover every necessary service and have a considerable body of ships at leisure for the support of our flotilla at Boulogne, in case of things going wrong upon the continent. All this, with the protection of our colonies, I think we are equal to ; but men are still wanting for the frigates ; and without an ample supply of them, we are without eyes or arms, both as to trade and cruising.

While on this subject, I have seen a sketch of an act for manning the navy by Mr. Frankland,¹ member for Thirsk, which is both simple and easy in execution. Its tendency is to increase apprentices and is worth your perusal. If coupled with enforcing the masters of merchant ships to keep up their proper number of apprentices, I think the benefit will be very great.

I trouble you likewise with the intended application to the king in council for the improvement of Portsmouth Academy. In its present state it is a nursery of vice and immorality. The expense is trifling, compared with the advantages proposed, and inferior to that of Woolwich. The enquiry was begun in Lord Spencer's time, and a very good report made by Mr. Pybus, but afterwards dropped. As I am very anxious during the time I sit here, to give the public any advantage that can be derived from long experience in office, and arrange those departments which fall under the admiralty in such a way as will ensure economy and dispatch, I flatter myself I shall as usual have your support and concurrence.

From Admiral Cornwallis suddenly leaving

¹ William Frankland. For about 200 years previous to the Reform Bill, Thirsk was practically a close borough in the hands of the Franklands.

Cawsand Bay without mentioning his intentions, I am fearful lest he should create a jumble by dispatching ships from his own squadron after the Brest squadron. We have however informed Sir J. B. Warren of our suspicions by express and how he is to act under such circumstances. This is to lessen the number of his own ships and proceed as before directed with what is necessary to make up those of Admiral Cornwallis to his first number ten. I remain,

My dear Sir,

Very faithfully yours,

BARHAM.

I hope Sir John will at furthest sail to-morrow.¹

¹ Warren did not finally sail, from Cawsand Bay, till the 20th January; Strachan, not till the 27th.

CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO THE
COMMAND OFF CADIZ

Sir John Orde to W. Marsden

[Adm. Sec. In Letters, 410.]

[Signed.] His Majesty's ship *Glory*, at Sea. 27th March, 1805.

Sir,—Be pleased to acquaint their lordships that since my last of the 20th instant I have again reconnoitred the port of Cadiz, but not so closely as at that period, owing to the unfavourable appearance of the weather. Five or six Spanish ships of the line are now in the roads, and five or six more in apparent preparation for sea, at the Carraccas ; two frigates lie below and one above.

A reinforcement of seamen, I have reason to believe, has been received by Admiral Gravina, from Galicia ; for the number of men employed in their ships and gun-boats, I am satisfied, are very considerable.

Supplies of stores and provisions, I fear, have also reached them, notwithstanding every endeavour on my part to prevent it ; but I trust to no very considerable amount.

[By intelligence received a day or two ago from Lord Robert Fitzgerald, and by letters from Mr. Matra (extracts of which I enclose), I find the Spaniards are collecting large magazines of corn in the neighbourhood of the Guadalquivir, where troops are also assembling, as it is given out, for the siege of Gibraltar, but more likely, I conceive,

for the mutual protection of Cadiz or for the invasion of Portugal.

In consequence of Lord Robert's information, I have ventured to extend the blockade of Cadiz to the port of San Lucar inclusive, without waiting for orders on the subject from England, as, but for that, I should have done, notwithstanding a strong persuasion of the necessity of the measure for his Majesty's service.]*

I will not trouble their lordships again with a statement of the force under my command and of the numerous important duties I have to perform with it. I can assure them every vessel under my orders is employed on the service I judge the most essential, and not one in looking after prizes, none of which I have to add to my list last sent.

The specie before mentioned to the board still remains in the ships of war, and such of the Spanish vessels detained by my squadron as were not wrecked in the late gales at Gibraltar, continue there at their lordships' disposal ; but I fear there is not any person at the Rock sufficiently qualified and authorized properly to execute the orders their lordships appear meditating to send respecting them.

R. 14th April. Minute, 16th April. Own receipt.
* Extract to be sent to Lord Mulgrave.

[Signed.]

H.M.S. Glory, at Sea. 27th March, 1805.

Sir,—Be pleased to acquaint their lordships of the admiralty that I have this moment received from Captain Hillyar¹ of the Niger their order of

¹ James Hillyar had originally commanded the Niger as a trooper. On 29th February, 1804, he was advanced to post rank and the Niger was rated as a 32-gun frigate, at the special request

the 4th March, in duplicate (the original not come to hand) respecting some vessels laden with wine from Cadiz to England, the contents of which are anticipated by directions already given on that subject.

[I have also received, by the same conveyance, your letters of the 7th and 26th February, all which Captain Hillyar informs me were put on board the Niger without his knowledge and without orders for their delivery.]*

By your letter of the 7th I perceive their lordships have authorized Lord Nelson to appoint an agent for the disposal of certain parts of the Spanish property detained by *my squadron*¹ and now at Gibraltar, and for sending home the remainder of it from that place, detained before the 11th January, of which I shall acquaint the officers more immediately concerned.

By your letter of the 26th February, I observe their lordships are of opinion it is an essential part of the duty of the squadron under my orders to protect the trade from England to Gibraltar, a circumstance I could not foresee, being positively directed by their lordships not to employ any part of the force under my command within the Straits, an order I must disobey if I comply with the other. Besides, I must beg you to acquaint their lordships with the impossibility of my affording a force, under actual circumstances, from that at present under my command, to protect vessels going to Gibraltar, without exposing to immense peril the safety of my whole squadron, and the total failure of the main object for which I judge I am placed here by their lordships—risks that I shall not

of Lord Nelson. He died, a rear-admiral, in 1843. See Marshall, iv. 849; O'Byrne, 516 n.

¹ Orde's italics.

think myself justified in running without their lordships' more positive commands for the purpose.**

*The letter is minuted: 'Duplicate received.' The minute of the Duplicate is:—16th April. * Send extract to Admiral Young for his information. ** To be so directed notwithstanding former orders.*

Sir John Orde to Lord Melville

[Adm. Sec. In Letters, 410.]

[Holograph.]

Glory, off Cadiz. 27th March, 1805.

[Private.]

My Lord,—Since writing the accompanying letter I have received dispatches from the board as late as the 26th February, but no orders about the specie on board the ships of war, nor any word that can satisfy my doubts respecting the propriety of my conduct in ordering the blockade of Cadiz.

By these dispatches I am made acquainted with the admiralty's having authorized *Lord Nelson*¹ to appoint an agent for the disposal of certain parts of the property detained by *my squadron*¹ and now at Gibraltar, an arrangement I should have thought myself entitled to complain of had I been junior to his lordship. I am also informed of its being their lordships' opinion that it is an essential part of the duty of the squadron under my command to protect the trade of England to Gibraltar. This expectation, I must confess, I was not prepared to have notified, not only because of my general orders, but also because of the insufficiency of my squadron for this duty in addition to the many others it is called upon to perform.

¹ Orde's italics.

Some other officer, my lord, may possibly feel these circumstances less mortifying than I do ; and, possessing greater abilities, may be able to perform all that seems expected by the admiralty from me, with the small force entrusted to my command ; no one, I will venture to say, can have shown more zeal and industry than I have done in the execution of an arduous duty, which I am sorry, notwithstanding, to say I now feel myself unequal to perform with satisfaction to my employers and to my own feelings, extremely hurt by recent treatment.

May I then request of your lordship permission to retire from a situation I owe to your goodness, and which to hold any longer would prove me unworthy the protection I have received. In resigning my command into abler hands, possessing the confidence of the admiralty, I shall have the satisfaction to believe I am promoting his Majesty's service at the same time that I am discharging a duty I owe to my country and to my own character. I remain, my Lord, with the strongest sense of obligation, of consideration and esteem,

Your lordship's

Most faithful and obedient Servant,

J. ORDE.

Minute.—6 May. Acquaint him that Lord Melville having transmitted to their lordships his letter to him of the 27th March requesting permission, &c., their lordships are pleased to comply therewith, and direct him, upon the Glory's arrival at Spithead, to strike his flag and come on shore.

Sir John Orde to the First Lord of the Admiralty

[*Private. Holograph.*] Glory, off Ushant. 30th April, 1805.

My Lord,—When the present alarm is over should it be convenient to allow me to go into port and repair to town for a few days, I would be thankful for the indulgence, having some matters to communicate to your lordship and the board, which I cannot so well convey in writing.

I have the honour to be, with the highest consideration,

My lord,

Your lordship's

Most obedient and faithful,
humble servant,

J. ORDE.

Minute, in Barham's hand. Compliments, and refer him to letter of yesterday. In consequence of his to Lord Melville, Glory has been ordered to Spithead [for his convenience]¹ to be refitted.

Sir John Orde to Lord Barham

[*Holograph.*]

Hackwood Park. 20th May, 1805.

My Lord,—I beg leave to take the earliest occasion of offering my sincere acknowledgements to your lordship for the flattering manner in which you was pleased to mark your entire approbation of my conduct, when I had the honour of paying my personal respects to you at the admiralty, and for allowing me the opportunity of giving an explanation to your lordship of the particular purport of my letter of the 27th March to

¹ Deleted.

Lord Melville, and of my motives and views in writing it.

I must confess that I had not at all foreseen the communication of it to the board, or that it could, being a private letter, have been made the ground of an order for me to strike my flag. I most assuredly had not looked to such a result in my case, from that channel with which I had been indulged in an occasional private correspondence ; but still less at the moment chosen for its execution, because I had not prepared myself for the total failure of accomplishment to the great object of my solicitude, not for my own private gratification, but for the good of the public service. That object alone impelled me, perhaps too strongly, to mark the idea I had of its importance, and of the interest which I therefore took in it even to the possible sacrifice of my situation. I had not however conceived that Lord Melville would have made public use of this letter without some previous representation of the impropriety, if such there was, in my conditional request for orders and support. It was of course not only my duty but my zealous wish, to obey without hesitation the orders of my superiors ; but I have ventured to persuade myself that an officer, entrusted with the charge of a delicate command and anxious both for his own credit and the good of the service, may be kindly and considerately allowed even to remonstrate warmly upon points of which his immediate position may make him, perhaps, the best judge of the practicable and safe accomplishment.

I request your lordship to pardon the frankness of these remarks, and not to deem me too presumptuous in hoping that, under all the circumstances, I may not be thought to have in any

degree forfeited my title to favourable consideration of my peculiar case, and for the adoption of such arrangement for me, as may rescue me from the advantage taken of my present situation, to calumniate and disgrace me in the public estimation, and may at the same time gratify my highest ambition to be honourably employed at any time, but especially at the present, in the active service of my country.

I have the honour to be with the highest consideration and regard,

My Lord,

Your most faithful and
obedient servant,

J. ORDE.

Lord Barham to (?) Sir John¹ Orde

[Autograph; press copy.]

Admiralty. 21st May, 1805.

Sir,—If you was acquainted with the number of letters which come daily into the hands of a first lord of the admiralty you would not wonder at his wish to divest himself of every one of a public nature by transferring it to the board. This is my own practice, and I could not undertake the department if it was otherwise. If it is your wish to be re-employed, I would recommend your making it known to the board; being,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble
servant,

BARHAM.

¹ No name. The concurrence of the date and the subject, as well as the sense of the following letter, render this suggestion fairly certain. Besides we may suppose that such a letter as this would not have been written to a mere nobody.

Sir John Orde to Lord Barham

[Holograph.]

Hackwood Park. 22nd May, 1805.

My Lord,—I am extremely sorry for any obtrusion upon your lordship's attention, even for a moment; but I had flattered myself that you had admitted the necessity and the use of some personal explanation affecting both my conduct, and supposed wish to resign my command founded upon a private letter to the late first lord, who had been pleased to invite that occasional distinction from letters to be submitted to the board and to be acted upon officially.

My sole object in addressing your lordship by subsequent letter was to express a natural hope, that I might experience the good and kind effects of my representations on your mind, and that they might lead to some favourable change in my present awkward position, which I could not conceive to be intended as such a punishment to me, as this recall, under the peculiar circumstances, must appear to at least all the uninformed part of the public. Your lordship will therefore see that I had ventured to persuade myself that I was entitled to an exemption from application even to your lordship, much more to the board, for fresh employment, whilst I indulged the flattering expectation of a review of the order to strike my flag, and of a consequent direction to resume my command or to take some other employment equally honourable.¹

¹ Sir John Orde became admiral of the blue by the Trafalgar promotion, and was one of the pall-bearers at Nelson's funeral; but he was never employed again. He died in 1824.

LORD CAMDEN¹ TO BARHAM

[Holograph.]

10th May, 1805.

My Lord,—I will send your lordship a letter from my office, respecting the sailing of the four additional ships, intended to reinforce Admiral Collingwood. By a former letter, his Majesty's pleasure has been communicated respecting the sailing of eight sail of the line which, it is understood, are to sail forthwith—if they have not already sailed, or as many of them as can be sent off together. With regard to the manner in which your lordship will send the remaining ships, whether alone or together, it is a matter of detail which is, of course, left to your judgment; but when they arrive, they will be placed under Collingwood's command, who will have notice that they are to reinforce him.

CAMDEN.²

SIR R. H. BICKERTON TO BARHAM

Queen, off Europa Point.

[Holograph.]

24th June, 1805.

My Lord,—I beg leave to inform your lordship that I arrived off Gibraltar this morning with the Tonnant, Bellerophon, and Minotaur, which Vice-Admiral Collingwood placed under my orders, and finding the transports were at sea, I determined not to anchor, but to stand off and on until I could arrange matters with Sir James Craig, with whom, I think, I could co-operate with satisfaction to myself and the Government on any service whatever. I have not been on shore, as reports

¹ Secretary for War.² It is so signed, without the customary formalities.

are prevalent that the Spanish squadron is at sea ; but I do not myself think it is, although its force might encourage the most timorous to hazard an action. I have seen the agent for transports and given the necessary directions respecting the transports, and several will now be sent home. I have put Mr. Mackenzie into the Childers, vice Sir William Bolton, Lord Melville having under certain circumstances desired that he might have that vacancy, and otherwise be placed in the first admiralty one.

I have the honour to be . . .

R. BICKERTON.

LORD NELSON TO LORD BARHAM

Of the few letters in this collection from Nelson to Barham, some have been already printed by Nicolas and are here only referred to. The others are now printed for the first time. They are all holograph.

Victory. 20th July, 1805.

My Lord,—It was not until my return, &c.—Nicolas, vi. 475.

Victory: Tetuan. 23rd July, 1805.

My Lord,—The fleet is complete, &c.—Nicolas, vi. 489.

BARHAM TO LORD MULGRAVE¹

[Draft, in Thomson's writing.]

15th August, 1805.

My dear Lord,—Having judged it necessary to establish an immediate line of communication between our different fleets and squadrons off Brest, Ferrol, Cadiz, &c., by means of frigates and

¹ Foreign Secretary.

other swift sailing vessels destined to cruise on particular stations, I had just framed the requisite orders for those destined to cruise off the coast of Portugal, when I discovered that orders had been given by this board, in consequence of Lord Hawkesbury's letter of 11th June, 1803, not to use the ports of Portugal as a naval station. I therefore deem it expedient to bring this circumstance under your lordship's immediate review, as materially interfering with, and indeed rendering nugatory all the measures on which we can rely for keeping up that communication between the Ferrol and Cadiz squadrons, the want of which hitherto, has, your lordship must be well aware, been attended with the most material disadvantage to H.M. service. I would fain hope, that the causes which at that moment may have rendered the injunction necessary, do no longer now exist, and that we shall be at liberty to direct our cruisers to call at Lisbon for such supplies as they may stand in need of, as well as for obtaining information from H.M. minister and consul there—the expediency of which I need not point out to your lordship.

With regard to our not carrying in prizes into the ports of Portugal, it is of less consequence than being cut off from all supplies and intelligence.

LORD NELSON TO LORD BARHAM

[R.N. College, Dartmouth] ¹

Albemarle [Street]. 29th August, 1805.

My dear Lord,—With great deference I venture, by your lordship's desire, to state my

¹ By the kindness of Captain Evan-Thomas, R.N., M.V.O.

opinion of the necessity of a constant succession of frigates and fast sailing sloops being employed for the protection of our commerce and the destruction of the enemy's numerous privateers on the coast of Portugal, from off Cape Ortegal to St. Ubes, many of them small, lurking under the Bayonne Islands and the Burlings. Ships on this service would not only prevent the depredations of the privateers, but be in the way to watch any squadron of the enemy should they pass on their track; a frigate belonging to the Mediterranean fleet must always be off Cape St. Vincent, therefore intelligence will be quickly conveyed and the enemy I think never again lost sight of.

I was happy to hear from good Mr. Thomson that your lordship had thought of extending frigates as much as possible from Cape Finisterre to Ireland; this will effectually protect our commerce and in every way greatly annoy the enemy.

I am ever, my dear Lord,
Your most faithful servant,
NELSON & BRONTÉ.

*Lord Barham to Mr. Pitt*¹

[Autograph; press copy.
Fragment.]

Admiralty.
4th September, 1805.

My dear Sir,—I just missed you on Monday and, as you may not come to town for a few days, I enclose you a rough sketch of my ideas concerning the disposition of the fleet. I have sent for Lord

¹ This seems to be a fragment of the covering letter of the Memorandum which follows. If so, it effectually disposes of the many myths which have gathered round Nelson's visit to the admiralty on 4th September.

Nelson and shall communicate to him what is so obvious to be done, that he may have time to prepare himself to proceed immediately in the Victory. I do not mean to load him with detail as he is already [*The rest is missing.*]

(?) ENCLOSURE

*Memorandum sent to Pitt*¹

[Autograph; press copy.]

4th September, 1805.

What I would propose is: To extend Lord Nelson's command to Cape St. Vincent including Cadiz and Gibraltar. To send him out immediately in the Victory and such line of battle ships as can be spared, to take the command of the ships at this time off Cadiz. To leave as many line of battle ships off that port under Vice-Admiral Collingwood, as will effectually secure a blockade of the port and of the combined fleets now assembled there. To proceed himself afterwards to Gibraltar, and having settled everything there for the defence of the garrison and trade coming in and going out of the Mediterranean, to visit the other parts of his command and form such a squadron as will embrace every duty belonging to it, acquainting us as often as possible with his proceedings.

To enable him to do this, we have established a small squadron of cruisers who will take up the line of communication from Cape St. Vincent to Cape Finisterre, and continue on it for the protection of the trade and annoying the enemy. If the squadron belonging to Russia in the upper part of the Mediterranean could be placed

¹ So endorsed.

under Lord Nelson's command, it would greatly strengthen our force in line of battle ships; and if the Swedes would supply five or six sail of the line to be under Lord Keith, it would effectually secure us against the increasing sea power of the enemy. From Cape Finisterre to Beachy Head must naturally fall under Admiral Cornwallis, who must be made strong enough not only to blockade Brest but to guard the ports of Rochefort and Ferrol with cruising squadrons; Lord Keith must be kept equally strong to guard against the Texel squadrons. This will be much facilitated if the Swedes will assist us, and which from the vicinity of their own ports may be done without inconvenience. The Russians, too, by means of the Black Sea, may be supplied from their own ports with stores and provisions. To complete this line of defence, I would station ships between Cork and Cape St. Vincent, and from Cork to Ushant; and without¹ those lines, flying squadrons of frigates for protection of the trade and annoying the enemy. For expeditions, I would reserve as many of the unappropriated ships as we are able to man, and all the coppered transports not employed abroad. If this plan can be carried into execution—and to which I see no objection but want of men—[I am of opinion]² the squadrons need not be large.

This subject, however, is a serious one and a proper qualified committee should be established and well paid to undertake it to advantage. My time is so fully occupied with the business of the office and the fleet that I have not a moment for detail, but will readily assist when any such committee calls upon me for assistance.

¹ *Sc.* outside of.

² Conjecture.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR LORD NELSON

[Draft.]

5th September, 1805.

Your Lordship, being already in possession of our several orders for the government of your conduct as commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean, you are, in addition thereto, hereby required and directed to proceed with the Victory and the ships named in the margin,¹ whose captains have orders to place themselves under your orders, to the Bay of Cadiz, where you may expect to find Vice-Admiral Collingwood and Vice-Admiral Sir Robert Calder, and the squadron of H.M. ships under his command. You will take such measures for the effectual blockade of the ports of Cadiz and San Lucar, as to your judgment shall seem best.

After leaving such number of ships under the command of Vice-Admiral Collingwood for the blockade of Cadiz, as that service may require, you will proceed to Gibraltar, and take the most effectual measures for putting that garrison and the port thereof, so far as relates to the naval department, into the best possible state of defence, by allotting such a force thereto as may secure the trade of H.M. subjects in passing and repassing the Gut.

And whereas, from the opinion we entertain of your conduct and abilities, we have thought fit to extend your command to Cape St. Vincent, you will proceed to form the best system for the management of so extensive a command that circumstances may admit of at the time.

¹ Not named in the draft.

MEMORANDUM

The [blank] frigate being ordered to be fitted for the service of Gibraltar, her captain shall be directed not only to superintend her equipment for this service, but also that of the gunboats preparing for the defence of Gibraltar. She will have her full complement of officers and seamen and the following extra establishment for the gunboat service: 1 captain, 5 lieutenants, 25 midshipmen or sub-lieutenants; and will have orders to proceed to Gibraltar and to be put under his orders.

Lord Nelson to be directed not to appropriate the [blank] to any other service whatever; but to keep her stationed there for the purpose of protecting the trade of the place, as well as manning the gunboats.

Lord Nelson to be authorized to make such presents (in moderation) through the consul-general to the Emperor of Morocco as may ensure a supply of provisions from Almará and Alcanar to the fleet off Cadiz as well as to the garrison of Gibraltar.

Lord Nelson to Lord Barham

Victory, off Mounts Bay.
18th September, 1805.

My dear Lord,—The Phœbe, Seahorse and Juno must soon come home, either with convoys or to be docked. I should therefore be glad, if it suits your lordship's arrangements, to have the Apollo and Sybille, whose captains are anxious to be with me and I am desirous to have heavy frigates with me on the day of battle; their

services on such occasions are inestimable. I can only repeat that I will do my best, and that I am, with the greatest respect, your lordship's

Obedient servant,

NELSON AND BRONTE.

Victory : Noon, 20th September.
Scilly, N.E. by E. true, 27 leagues.
Adl. Stirling in sight, South.

My dear Lord,—The Decade I see is coming down with Sir Richard Bickerton. I can run over the absence, for a length of time, of Amazon, Decade, Melpomene, Renommée, Lively (who is attached to Sir James Craig), Chiffone, L'Aimable and most probably Sirius; therefore when 8 frigates are taken to watch the enemy and be with the fleet, with those off St. Vincent, Sparte, without thinking of the coast of Barbary and towards the Salvages, I fear the Mediterranean will be very short or the fleet be without frigates; and as we calculated that the enemy had 14 frigates and 10 corvettes to put to sea with their fleet, it was fixed that not less than 8 should be with the British fleet and 3 brigs and some small craft to carry letters. The Straits and Cartagena must be watched; I am also told by Captain Lechmere of the Thunderer that the French captain told him that the Hannibal was in Toulon, and that they had fitted out two old ships; therefore I must send up and examine Toulon, and this will call for two frigates. I mention these things to show your lordship how very short I shall be of frigates and sloops; I do not mention ships of the line, as I know you will send them to me as fast as possible.

I fell in with Rear-Admiral Stirling this morning with five sail of the line. We have very dirty

weather, but I hope by perseverance to get on and make a tolerable passage.

I am with great respect,
Your lordship's most faithful servant,
NELSON AND BRONTE.

As Duckworth is ready, he could, if your lordship intended the Belleisle or any ship from Plymouth to join me, come out in her and hoist his flag in the Prince of Wales; and if he wants Captain Dunn with him, Captain Conn could take the Acasta—for it would be very hard to turn Conn twice adrift in the Mediterranean; I should hardly ever forgive myself.

Yours, my dear lord, faithfully,
NELSON AND BRONTE.

Or Duckworth could come out in the Acasta if the Belleisle does not come out; but frigates, I see, will be most severely felt; I have lost enough for want of them, both in the late and present war.

Victory. 30th September, 1806:

My dear Lord,—I do not fail, &c.—Nicolas, vii.
56.

Vice-Admiral Collingwood to Lord Barham

[Holograph.]

Dreadnought, off Cadiz.
30th September, 1805.

My Lord,—Your lordship will be informed of the arrival of Lord Nelson off Cadiz and of his having resumed the command of the fleet. I beg to take this opportunity of expressing my high sense of the honour your lordship and the board of admiralty did me, when, at a very critical period, and when important services were to be expected

from the fleet, your lordship was pleased to place me in a distinguished situation, wherein I should probably have an opportunity of evincing the zeal and industry which I have ever exercised in his Majesty's service.

For this mark of your lordship's good opinion I feel very grateful, and beg your lordship will excuse the trouble I give you in this expression of it.

I have the honour to be . . .

CUTHBERT COLLINGWOOD.

*R.-Adml. Sir Richard Bickerton*¹ to Lord Barham

[*Holograph.*]

Cheltenham. 4th October, 1805.

My Lord,—I had the honour of receiving your lordship's very obliging letter when I was on the point of leaving Portsmouth, and intended replying to it on the road, but found myself unequal to the task, for I am still in a very weak state of convalescence.

From my observations on the Russian ships when I served under Lord Duncan in the North Sea, I fear your lordship must not expect any very active services from the squadron now about to enter the Mediterranean; for with the exception of Commander Greig's own ship—which is in as perfect a state of discipline as any in our service—I much doubt whether any will be found able to keep the sea during the winter months; for the Russians have, generally speaking, an aversion to bad weather, and few of their ships are coppered, which renders them of little use as cruisers. I am nevertheless of opinion that this

¹ Sir Richard Hussey Bickerton, just returned from the Mediterranean.

squadron will be fully equal to the performance of all the services for which ships can be required to the eastward of Sardinia; for the French have no naval force of consequence in Toulon, and the Spaniards are not likely to trust theirs so far to the eastward; so that there will be no danger in employing small detachments of the Russians for the protection of the different anchorages where naval assistance may be necessary, and in watching the mouth of the Adriatic; for although the decisive steps lately taken upon the continent have lessened the danger I once thought hanging over Egypt from St. Cyr's army, yet as there is, in these times, no reasoning upon probabilities, I should not be at all surprised if an attempt was made when least expected, and I think it ought to be guarded against. There are many small privateers in the Adriatic and Archipelago which do great mischief to our trade. I rejoice to hear that Lord Nelson is to have so large a fleet under his command.

With respect to the gunboats intended for the Gibraltar service, will your lordship excuse me if I take the liberty of hazarding an opinion? Thirty-two are far too many; for the Spaniards will, as they always have done, take care to have at least double your numbers; and as the crews of their boats are regularly trained, and manage their sails and oars with great skill, it is reasonable to suppose that in a gunboat fight, they would beat ours, which must be manned, on the spur of the occasion, from the ships which happen to be in the bay or by volunteers from the garrison; perhaps with men unused to such service, and certainly not in the habit of acting together. My plan would be to have six, or at most eight boats, of the best construction, each with a regular officer

and crew, and one long heavy gun; these would probably out-row and sail the Spanish boats, and by hovering on the enemy's flank when they made their attack, which is always done in a line abreast, they would necessarily be obliged to direct their pursuit to our boats—which would escape—or be exposed to a destructive fire; and in either case, the escape of the destined victim would be facilitated.

Captain Stuart of the *Decade*, who brought me home, and from whom I received the kindest attentions, is extremely anxious to return to the Mediterranean, not only because he wishes to serve under Lord Nelson, who has a great regard for him, but he enjoys the most uninterrupted good health there, which is not the case in this climate, where he is subject to dreadful attacks of rheumatism. I am therefore induced to say that if your lordship's arrangements will admit of his being sent back to the station, I should feel it an obligation conferred upon myself if he is ordered to return. I shall only add that Captain Stuart is such a man as your lordship would approve if he had the honour of being known to you.

I have the honour to be with sincere respect,

Your lordship's much obliged
and very obedient servant,
R. BICKERTON.

Lord Nelson to Mr. Marsden

Victory, 16 leagues west of Cadiz.
6th October, 1805.

Sir,—The French have at Toulon, I am told, one ship of the line ready for sea, another fitting, and the ship at Genoa launched; with three frigates and three corvettes who have been at Algiers and

are cruising on the coast of France, Genoa, and towards Leghorn. I am therefore extremely anxious to get a proper force to place on that coast to keep them in check, without which no convoy is safe in passing to or from Malta; and I am sorry to say that it is reported to me that the Spider schooner is supposed to be lost or run ashore to save the crew, as she has been missing two months; it was not intended to send her to sea again, if she arrived safe at Malta. The Seahorse is coming down with the next convoy from Malta, and I hope the Merlin will come with her to carry the convoy to England, and that the merchants will not require a 20th October or 1st November convoy; but I fear they will. I shall beg leave to refer their lordships to my letter of July last for the account of vessels required inside the Mediterranean, to which I am now to add three frigates for the service of the expedition.

¹ I am sorry ever to trouble their lordships with anything like a complaint of a want of frigates and sloops, but if the different services require them and I have them not, they must be neglected to be set forward. I am calling all the frigates about me which I possibly can; for if I was to be an angel and attend to all the other points of my command, and let the enemy escape for want of the eyes of the fleet, I should consider myself as most highly reprehensible; therefore never less than eight frigates and three good fast sailing brigs must ever be with the fleet to watch Cadiz; and it will, to carry in and out transports and refit, take at least ten, and four brigs for to do this service well. At present, I have only been able to collect two, which makes me very uneasy.

¹ The first part of this paragraph is printed—with much verbal inaccuracy—by Nicolas, vii. 76, from Clarke and McArthur.

The Eurydice is looking out under Cape St. Mary's to intercept the enemy's victuallers coming from the Bay. I shall send off Cape Cantin a fast sailing frigate or sloop, as also off the Salvages, in case any squadron of the enemy should escape from Cadiz, as soon as the proper number are arrived to watch that place. I request their lordships will hurry out the frigates as expeditiously as possible, for many stations must be neglected until they and the sloops arrive.

I am, with the highest respect,
Sir, your very obedient servant,
NELSON AND BRONTE.

Lord Nelson to Lord Barham

Victory. 13th October, 1805.

My dear Lord,—From the very distressed state in which I found Sir Robert Calder I gave my consent to his returning in the Prince of Wales ; but when I received Sir J. T. Duckworth's letter that he was coming out in the Acasta frigate, there was only the Prince of Wales in which the admiralty or myself could, with propriety, order him to hoist his flag ; for the Dreadnought, from her present heavy sailing, could never keep up with the fleet in a chase. I will not trouble your lordship with copies of my letters ; the answers were all of the tenor of Sir Robert Calder's conversation with Commissioner Otway. I could not stand it, and home goes the Prince of Wales this day ; and as she wants several little things done to her, perhaps instead of Gibraltar Mole it will be nearly as quickly done by her going direct to Spithead.

The Prince and Britannia sail most wretchedly ;

and as the enemy must move from Cadiz, and probably will not volunteer an action, I own I long for faster sailing ships ; and if not three deckers, two alongside an enemy is better than three deckers a great way off.¹ The ships are so crowded at the harbour's mouth, being close to the Porpoises and the Diamond, that Captain Blackwood thinks that fire ships might be used with advantage ; therefore I shall be very glad of the three your lordship proposed for this fleet. I agree most perfectly with you that there are times when they might be used with much advantage and therefore that a fleet should not be without them.

I approve more and more of the station I have determined to keep—16 or 18 leagues to the westward of Cadiz ; for although it is possible that the combined fleets may get a few leagues before me into the Mediterranean, yet that is not to be put in competition with the chance of my being drove into the Mediterranean and thus leave the enemy at perfect liberty to send detachments to the East or West Indies, or to proceed, if they pleased, even to Brest ; and as it is possible the Brest fleet may be ordered to relieve the Cadiz fleet, I should have no chance of getting at them before their junction if I did not keep towards Cape St. Mary's.

I have appointed my nephew to the Eurydice and Captain Hoste to the Amphion, which I hope your lordship will be so good as to approve ; and believe me, with great respect,

Your most faithful and obedient servant,

NELSON AND BRONTE.

¹ So in the original. He presumably meant to say : ' a two-decker alongside . . . than a three-decker a long way off ' ; but in the hurry of writing, Nelson did not always express himself clearly.



Vice-Admiral Collingwood to Lord Barham

[Holograph.]

Euryalus : off Cadiz.

26th October, 1805.

My Lord,—I beg your lordship will allow me to congratulate you on the most complete victory that ever was obtained over an enemy—which I do with a heart flowing with gratitude to the Divine Providence. The hand of God was visible in our protection afterwards—for the little shift of wind alone, in the night, could prevent the greater part of his Majesty's fleet from going on the rocks with the enemy; when all human efforts seemed to be in vain, the wind came suddenly round from WSW to South and SSE. Your lordship will have observed that the situation of the enemy—lying just to windward of the rocks between Conil and Trafalgar—was in the end the cause of peculiar difficulty; but I think I may venture to affirm that had the action happened in the ocean, where there was nothing but the enemy to look to, there would not a ship less than 27 have been taken.

Four of the French ships separated to the southward; and as their destination was certainly¹ the Mediterranean, I think it is probable they have gone there; and as I understood from Lord Nelson that Admiral Louis was gone with the convoy above Cartagena, and then to return, I think there is a fair chance of their falling into his hands. They were the van of the enemy and not much injured. Gravina carried 10 into Cadiz with him, very perfect ships.

We have in the Mediterranean six with Admiral Louis, and I suppose 10 or 12 that may be made

¹ Sc. before the battle.

serviceable at Gibraltar, but at present I can only conjecture about them. This unfortunate gale of wind which has completely dispersed the whole fleet, and, I dare say, sunk every one of the prizes ! But to this we must submit. I only trust that your lordship will believe that my utmost exertion of body and mind has been made for the public good ; but there are situations in which human prudence and exertion avails not, and this seems to be mine ; but I will never despair, and do the best I can. I proposed liberating all the Spanish prisoners at Gibraltar—the men on receipt, the officers on parole not to serve until regularly exchanged, with the exception of flag officers, all of whom shall come to England. The French prisoners shall be kept until I receive orders from England.

Many of the British ships must go to England ; Victory, Sovereign, and *Téméraire*, *Belleisle* and *Tonnant*, I should suppose, from the situations they were in, are totally unfit, and much reduced in their companies. I have no reports ; but before I left the *Sovereign* I was told the supposed loss was between 2 and 300 men ; and although this is a great number, I can believe it may not be very incorrect. For myself, I have not had time to consider where I can fix ; but I believe the *Queen* will be the most proper ship for me until the admiralty determine on this subject ; and if your lordship will allow me to have Captain Thomas with me, who is now in the *Ætna*, but who I shall appoint to one of the vacant ships, I think I shall be as well regulated as the present circumstances will admit of. The two vacancies made by the death of Captains Duff and Cooke I purpose filling up by Captains Thomas and Parker ; and their sloops, by the first lieutenants

of the Victory and Sovereign, and hope your lordship, when it comes officially to the admiralty, will not disapprove of the arrangement. I have ordered a day of public thanksgiving to be observed in the fleet whenever the ships are collected.

That Order and a Memorandum of thanks to companies for this good service, I have sent to the admiralty ; but, my lord, although the exertion on the 21st was very great, it was not equal by any means ; some of the ships in the rear of my line, although good sailing ships, did not answer my expectation fully. The Defiance, I shall require some explanation from for giving me no assistance in the case of the disabled ships since the action ; and when, with difficulty and signals flying for hours, I got her down to form a line when Gravina made his appearance on the 23rd, at daylight next morning he was again missing—a perfect ship—and I have seen nothing of him since. If he has found good employment it is unknown to me now, and I shall be glad to find he has.

I have the honour to be . . .

CUTHBT. COLLINGWOOD.

Vice-Admiral Collingwood to Lord Barham

[Holograph.]

Queen. 5th November, 1805.

My Lord,—Captain Blackwood is charged with my dispatches, and I cannot let him go without mentioning to your lordship my high obligation to that officer, for his zeal and activity, and the great assistance I received from him when I was embarked in the Euryalus. I have endeavoured in my dispatches to give the admiralty the most distinct account I could of all our proceedings, but am still fearful of their imperfection. Captain

Blackwood is fully informed of everything that has passed, so that any explanation their lordships may require, there is none better qualified to give it.

I have the honour . . .

CUTHBT. COLLINGWOOD.

[Holograph.]

Queen, off the Straits.
5th November, 1805.

My Lord,—Amongst the various subjects connected with the late action, there is one for which I feel so much interested that I hope your lordship will excuse my mentioning it, when I am persuaded it will be considered as very worthy your attention.

Captains Duff and Cooke were killed in the action; two better officers the navy could not boast. On enquiring into the state of the families they have left, I am informed Captain Duff has left a wife and several young children, and in very moderate circumstances, not at all adequate to their rearing and education. Capt. Cooke's family is much better provided for.

In submitting this subject to your lordship, I feel that I have done all that is necessary for them; these unfortunates have claims on their country, and their cause cannot be in better hands than under your lordship's protection.

I have the honour . . .

Vice-Admiral Collingwood to W. Marsden

[Duplicate. Signed.] Queen, at the entrance of the Straits.
5th November, 1805.

Sir,—The Euryalus brings to England the duplicates of my dispatches of the 22nd and 24th ult., sent by the Pickle schooner, and of the 28th, by the way of Lisbon, together with the further

account of the proceedings of the squadron, with reports of killed and wounded, and a list of the enemy's fleet, showing how they are disposed of.

I did intend that the disabled ships should have formed a squadron of at least 6 ships, for their more security on the passage; but, detained to the westward of the Straits longer than I expected, and the wind coming easterly, Rear Admiral Knight has ordered them to proceed to England.

From the accounts I received of the state of the ships at Gibraltar, I understand several others must come to England besides those contained in the list I send by the *Euryalus*,—a duplicate of which I enclose. In the returns, three ships—the *Prince*, *Tonnant*, and *Agamemnon*¹—are vacant. I have not yet received them. The *Prince* and *Agamemnon* have few killed or wounded, but the *Tonnant* a good many.

I am . . .

TO THE KING

[Copy.]

Admiralty. 6th November, 1805.
9 o'clock.²

Lord Barham has the utmost satisfaction in congratulating your Majesty on the great and glorious victory obtained by your Majesty's fleet, under the command of the late much lamented Lord Viscount Nelson, over the combined fleet of the enemy off Cadiz, the general outlines of which Lord Barham directed to be forwarded to your Majesty by Mr. Marsden in the night, while his lordship was engaged in giving the requisite orders for dispatching reinforcements

¹ *Sc.* their returns.

² This must be A.M. The news is traditionally said to have reached the admiralty about 1 o'clock in the morning.

to Admiral Collingwood, which he trusts will enable him not only to renew the blockade of Cadiz, but to complete the measures which his truly great and much lamented predecessor had in contemplation.

Lord Barham to Vice-Admiral Collingwood

[Signed ; press copy.]

Admiralty. 6th November, 1805.

Sir,—The two storeships the *Prévoyante* and *Camel*, now loaded for Gibraltar, being still kept in the river by the strong easterly winds, it has been judged expedient to order the Woolwich store ship lying at Spithead with stores for India to be sent to you under protection of the line of battle ship alluded to in my letter of this date. I enclose a copy of her bills of lading for your information, that you may be the better enabled to judge of the supply which she will afford. The store ships the *Camel* and *Prévoyante* will follow as soon as possible.

I am, . . .

[Autograph ; press copy.]

Admiralty. 6th November, 1805.

Sir,—I condole and congratulate you most sincerely on the providential events that have happened. That no time may be lost to enable you to continue the blockade of Cadiz, or send home your disabled ships, the *Saturn* will be the bearer of this ; and the *Eagle*, *Athénien*, *Standard* and *Intrepid* will follow in a very few days. With these ships and the *Powerful* and *Superb*, which sailed from Plymouth the 4th, you will have it in your power to send home immediately your disabled ships ; and as a further help, we have for that purpose ordered Lord Gardner to send you

two frigates; Admiral Cornwallis, the same number, and Sir J. Saumarez, one; the *Acasta* will likewise sail in a very few days from Plymouth. These ships will join you in a short time and you will, in the meantime, naturally avail yourself of taking everything that can be spared from the ships which are coming home, one half of whom should come to Portsmouth and the other half to Plymouth.

The enclosed specification will inform you of the stores that are ready to send; and I have only to add that I am, with much esteem . . .

Lord Barham to Vice-Admiral Collingwood

[Signed; press copy.] Admiralty. 7th November, 1805.

Sir,—In any arrangement which the late events may give rise to, I shall be glad if Captain Austen, now in the *Canopus*, could be put into the *Acasta* which will be vacant by the removal of Captain Dunn into Sir John Duckworth's flag-ship. I shall send you a list of such other officers as I am desirous of having brought forward into particular ships as soon as the same can be prepared.

I am . . .

BARHAM.

[Autograph; press copy.] Admiralty. 8th November, 1805.¹

Sir,—I have been so much engaged for some days past that I have not had it in my power to turn my attention to the state of the fleet under

¹ Some sentences of this letter are printed, inaccurately, in the *Life of Collingwood*, p. 154.

your command. We have this day sent you a commission of the same extent with Lord Nelson's, and I shall be glad to be informed fully and as soon as you are acquainted with the situation of the enemy at Cadiz, Cartagena and Toulon, with the number of line of battle ships which you think is necessary for blockading these ports and covering the convoys to, from and in the Mediterranean. To this arrangement I will readily conform, because I am sure you will ask for no more than is sufficient for the services of your command, and that you will consider the very extensive demands that are made upon us from every quarter of the globe.

My desire is that you will send home such ships as are in the worst condition and have been longest off the ground, and that you will take as much provisions and stores from them as will only leave them a sufficiency for their passage home. A proper ship will be sent you for your flag, but for want of men this cannot be done till the ships you send home are arrived.

On the subject of promotion I will endeavour to comply with your request though in one instance not strictly regular; and in order to prevent disappointment to individuals, I must beg that you may strictly conform to the rules laid down by the admiralty, by which they leave deaths and court martial vacancies to the commanding officers and reserve all others to themselves.

You will also send your list of vacancies and promotions, with the disposition of your force, every opportunity and by monthly returns. I am the more particular on these subjects because the neglect of them has created much disappointment to individuals as well as their friends and occasioned great trouble in the office. It has

also left us in the dark on subjects of great moment, to the material injury of the service.

I shall trouble you, through my secretary, with a list of such persons as I wish to fill the admiralty vacancies ; and with much esteem, I remain . . .

BARHAM.

*Lord Barham to Mr. Pitt*¹

[Autograph ; press copy.] Admiralty. 9th November, 1805.

My dear Sir,—As far as I can judge of the nature of the new Order, I think it will lead to a very considerable degree of disappointment if any material retrospect was to take place. As far as Sir Peter Parker and Admiral Cornwallis, I see no difficulties ; both have distinguished themselves, and if they had not done so conspicuously—which however is otherwise,—the one is admiral of the fleet and the other commands what has always been reckoned the post of honour. Sir Peter Parker's conduct at Charleston was of the most hazardous kind ; Admiral Cornwallis's retreat from a very superior French force was extremely meritorious ; I was at the admiralty at that time and recommended strongly a mark of distinction. A ribbon to Lord Northesk, compared with an English peerage, is trifling. Have you ever thought of one for Lady Nelson during her life ? She is as far as I have heard a valuable woman and irreproachable in her conduct. Such instances seldom occur and it does not add to the peerage. As soon as the first order is determined on, the second will be easy, but the old proverb of *Bis dat qui cito dat* is as true in honours as in pensions. I shall inform Sir I. Heard that

¹ So endorsed.

you are to send for him, that he may be in the way ; and as I am a very poor judge of etiquette, I hope you will make such an arrangement as will please members of both orders.

I am, my dear Sir,

Very faithfully yours,

BARHAM.

Lord Melville to J. D. Thomson

[*Holograph.*]

Dalchonzie. 12th November, 1805.

Dear Sir,—I thank you for the perusal of Captain Blackwood's letter, which I return to you. I cannot, except on public grounds, regret so enviable a death as that which fell to the lot of Lord Nelson ; it is impossible to calculate the manifold benefits to this country which he accomplished by his dying achievement. I shall not trouble Lord Barham by a congratulatory letter, but you may assure him that nobody more sincerely rejoices in the just merit he will have with the public by his great exertions in the naval administration of its affairs, by which he furnished the means to Lord Nelson of performing the great service he has conferred upon his country.

I remain, dear Sir,

Yours sincerely,

MELVILLE.

Lord Barham to Lord Collingwood

[*Autograph ; press copy. Fragment.*] [? 16th November, 1805.]

. . . . well deserved honours.

I am to acknowledge your public dispatches by the way of Lisbon, and although they are only two days later than those received by the Pickle, yet it

is a satisfaction to know that you have weathered the gale without loss to any of our own ships. It is a great disappointment not to see the enemies' ships conducted into our ports after so glorious a victory, but I am afraid we are unreasonable in not being content with what Providence has done for us.

I am very anxious to see the defects of your fleet, and to know your intentions as to those which are to come home. Till these are received I can form no judgment if any or which reinforcements are necessary. I reckon upon the six ships that were under Admiral Louis, with the two sent with Sir John Duckworth, and those now ready to sail under Lord Amelius Beauclerk to be effectually 11 ships, and with the Pompée and Kent to make in all 13; and as far as my information reaches, I propose to give you 25 sail of the line, 20 frigates and 15 sloops and smaller vessels; with these I flatter myself you will be able to blockade Cadiz and Cartagena, and give assistance and protection to the trade, and various other services within the Mediterranean.

I propose, too, to keep a small separate squadron stationed between Cape Finisterre and Cape St. Mary, for the purpose of ready communication and annoying the enemy. This is my general design and I hope it will meet with your convenience.

The navy and victualling boards are charged to keep you fully supplied, each in their way, and I have no reason to think they will be deficient. The remaining frigates which

[The rest is missing.]

*Admiral Roddam to Lord Barham**[Holograph.]*Killingworth, near Newcastle-on-Tyne.
18th November, 1805.

My Lord,—I flatter myself I shall be forgiven troubling you to congratulate you on the great good that has happened to this country in general, and since your presiding at the admiralty board. It has made everybody alive, and me doubly so, as many of the officers who achieved this great victory have formerly sailed with me. Collingwood was a midshipman with me in the *Lennox*, and I never rested till I made him both lieutenant and captain,¹ well knowing his worth; and I do believe there is not a more complete officer in the navy; at the same time I cannot help blaming my country for the very ² treatment Sir Robert Calder meets with after attacking double his force in a thick fog and near the enemy's port, where they might have been reinforced, and sending two of their ships home. Had that action not been, we should not have given so complete a blow off Cadiz. Having information from Mr. Marsden that your lordships have signed a commission for me,³ may I beg you will order it to be sent me. I have on all occasions, and always shall be, ready to serve my king and country; and am, with wishes and respects, my Lord, your lordship's most obedient servant,

R. RODDAM.

I shall be here for the winter.

¹ At the age of 86, Roddam's memory was not quite accurate; he appears to exaggerate his influence on the career of Collingwood, who was a sort of cousin.

² A word omitted: 'scurvy' perhaps.

³ As admiral of the red, by the 'Trafalgar' promotion.

Vice-Admiral Collingwood to Lord Barham

[Life of Collingwood, p. 153.]

Queen : Gibraltar Bay. 15th November, 1805.

I beg to express my earnest hope that your lordship will take into consideration the peculiar circumstances of the late action, in which as much gallantry was displayed by the fleet, and a powerful armament of the enemy ruined, in as short a time as in any action ; but what distinguished it from all others is, that the usual reward to the captains, arising from the sale of prizes, is almost all lost by the wreck and destruction of the ships. What government may please to do in this respect for the fleet, I cannot say, but none was ever more worthy of its regard.

To the officers, among whom are many young men who are qualified for lieutenants, the most grateful reward would be promotion ; and if your lordship would enable me to dispense it to them, by commissioning the four ships, and appointing the officers serving in this fleet, I should feel exceedingly gratified in having it in my power to reward so much merit as is now before me.

I have mentioned this subject in the full confidence that your lordship feels the same disposition towards them with myself ; and in doing it, I have only performed a duty which I owe to them.

I enclose to your lordship a letter which was sent to me from the Victory. Captain Adair, I understand, was an officer of highly estimable character ; and in submitting the case of his family to the consideration and protection of your lordship, I feel assured that I place it where due regard will be paid to their misfortunes.

III.

Z

Lord Barham to Lord Collingwood

[Autograph; press copy. Fragment.]

BAHAMA ¹

First lieutenant of the Dreadnought in the action to command, and 4 mates or midshipmen as lieutenants.

SAN ILDEFONSO ¹

First lieutenant of the Neptune in the action to command and 4 mates or midshipmen as lieutenants.

Masters, gunners, pursers, boatswains, &c., taken from their respective corps.

This is all that occurs to me on the subject of promotions. What remains to be done will be taken up as soon as all the ships are arrived, and a new order of merit determined on.

The Ocean, a very fine ship of [98] guns, is just come forward and it is my intention that she shall be sent out to bear your lordship's flag.

I could wish Adair of the Sirius, when he has passed his examination, to be made a lieutenant, in consideration of his father's being killed in the Victory.

I am glad Sir John Duckworth has taken the command at Cadiz and that he has six ships with him. I hope too you will have Cartagena and Toulon equally watched, and concert with the Russian admiral how you can assist each other to the best economy and advantage in employing the ships.

¹ These were two of the four prizes sent to Gibraltar. The 1st sheet, which is missing, presumably contained the promotions to the other two.

After leaving you 25 sail of the line, my desire is that those in want of great refittings and repair may be sent home, when others shall be regularly sent out to replace them. The same rule may be observed as to frigates so that Gibraltar may not be overloaded nor the [work] there impeded by numbers. I count upon

[a sheet is missing]

is cruisers when we can spare them. The Anson is fitting to lay in Gibraltar, and gunboats [are on] their passage. Vice-Admiral Knight, on his promotion, will be removed into the fleet. If anything can be done for Admiral Louis's son I shall be glad, as he was unfortunate in being absent. Lord Radstock is impatient concerning his son¹ who I believe is in your fleet. In short the applications are so numerous and the opportunities of complying with them so few, that my whole time is spent in answering unreasonable demands.

I have only to add, that I have the honour to be, my Lord, your lordship's

Most obedient and faithful servant,

BARHAM.

P.S.—I flatter myself the captured ships that have been destroyed will not be wholly lost to the captors.

Lord Barham to Lord Collingwood

[Autograph; press copy.] Admiralty. 29th November, 1805.

My Lord,—I have received your lordship's two letters of the 5th to which I shall pay proper

¹ Granville George Waldegrave; born 24th September, 1786; lieut., 20th July, 1804; commander, 22nd January, 1806; captain, 16th February, 1807.

attention. Being now in possession of your public dispatches and the defects of the fleet under your command, we are enabled to decide upon the employment of them. It is our intention to leave you 25 sail of the line, and to furnish you with as many frigates and smaller vessels as the extended services of the Mediterranean may require. You will therefore, select from the best conditioned ships under your command as many of the line as, with the seven lately sent out, and the *Pompée* and *Kent*, now under orders to join you, will make up 25 effectual ships, and send the others home to be repaired, as fast as you possibly can, and in a manner consistent with their security in crossing the Bay.

With this force, you will naturally make the port of Cadiz your first object ; and after leaving Sir John Duckworth with a sufficient number of ships to blockade that port and prevent any flying squadron of the enemy from annoying him, proceed yourself with the fleet into the Mediterranean and take such measures and stations for watching the ports of Cartagena and Toulon as may appear to you to be proper ; and after these services are provided for, your lordship will dispose of the remaining ships and smaller frigates and vessels as the various calls of the station may require.

For the more particular and general orders concerning the duties of your command, I shall leave you to the several orders and papers which you will find in possession of Lord Nelson whose loss is never to be sufficiently regretted.

Hitherto I have had no time to look into your appointments ; and till it has been determined what promotions and honours shall take place it is not in my power to decide ; but your lordship may depend on every degree of attention from me

that is consistent with admiralty regulations, and that I am very sincerely,

My Lord, your lordship's

Most obedient humble servant,

BARHAM.

As it is my wish not to keep the line of battle ships more than three years off the ground, and the frigates two, you will have the attention to send them home accordingly.

Lord Collingwood to Lord Barham

Queen, off Carthagena.

4th December, 1805.

[*Holograph.*]

My Lord,—I have received the honour of your lordship's letters by the *Acasta*—which were enclosed with the bill of lading of the *Woolwich* store-ship, intended for Gibraltar.

I beg to give your lordship my best thanks for your congratulations on the late great events, and to assure your lordship, that, as the first object of my life has been a faithful execution of my duty, nothing can be more gratifying to me than your lordship's approbation. I know, amongst the many various, and important duties of the high office I am at present entrusted with, I must sometimes need your lordship's indulgence; but as far as indefatigable industry and the exercise of my best abilities will direct me, they shall not be wanting.

I think I have anticipated what your lordship seems most anxious about. The blockade of Cadiz has never been remitted for one moment; for considering how precarious an anchorage Gibraltar bay is at this season, I kept the sea after the action with the least injured ships, until many of

the crippled ones had sailed for England, where I judged it best to send all those which wanted material repairs, and when the bay was cleared of ten of them, I proceeded to Gibraltar to forward the departure of the rest. I had considered the uncertain station of the Rochefort squadron, and directed that not fewer than six should sail together; but my letter to Admiral Knight on this subject did not arrive at Gibraltar before the *Victory*, *Belleisle*, and *Bellerophon* had sailed.

I had another view in keeping the sea at that time (which had a little of pride in it), which was to show the enemy that it was not a battle, nor a storm, which was to remove a British squadron from the station they were to hold; and I have heard that keeping the sea after what had passed was a matter of the greatest astonishment to them.

The provision which your lordship is making of ships to succeed those gone home, appears to me to be ample for the present, for your lordship will be informed from the state of the enemy's fleet, which I sent by the *Euryalus*, that a great force will not be necessary to maintain the blockade; for except the *Terrible*, which, I understand, was in a bad state and unfit to come to sea when their fleet sailed, the French *Neptune*, which did not suffer much in the action, and four French frigates, they have not a ship which can be made ready for some months. I propose however to place seven sail there when I can, with some frigates &c. which will admit of a relief for a supply of water &c.

At this port, *Carthagen*, I find eight sail of the line, two frigates and some small vessels, completely ready for sea; but I have no reason to think they will come out, now that our squadron

is here. Whenever other ships arrive I propose sending home the *Britannia*, *Neptune*, *Excellent*, and *Dreadnought*; the last has no defect but being very foul and sailing ill.

Stores were certainly much wanted for the ships, but with the economical use of those that were at Gibraltar, and a little supply of rope which the Commissioner got from the prize ships, we should have done well without the *Woolwich*, until the ship arrived with an assortment suited to Gibraltar, for of her cargo I observe there is but little rope, and a great quantity of stores for the ships building, and for making their sails. I should have been tempted to send her on, but from the fear of causing confusion by sending to India duplicates of what may be again gone from England.¹

I have the honour . . .

CUTHBT. COLLINGWOOD.

Lord Collingwood to Lord Barham

Queen, off Carthage.

5th December, 1805.

[Holograph.]

My Lord,—In reply to your lordship's letter of the 16th last, on the subject of the naval force necessary for the service of this station, I think 25 sail of the line which your lordship proposes are more large ships than are necessary in the present state of the enemy. At Cadiz, I do not reckon more than 3 ships that can be made fit for sea for some months; at this port, there are 8 ready and one more may come forward; of Toulon, I am not so well informed, but by the last account

¹ Some edited sentences of this and the following letter have been printed as one, dated 4th December, in the *Life of Collingwood*, p. 155.

(which was but a vague one) I heard there was one of the line and four frigates, but I shall soon determine that. From this state of the enemy, I should conclude that 20 sail of clean bottomed ships would be quite competent to blockade all points, and occasionally to make a detachment upon any particular occurrence—as that on which Sir John Duckworth is now—20 frigates, and 15 or 16 sloops and small vessels, will be very ample for all the services of the station. To preserve a communication with the army, Malta, and other distant points, requires that the small vessels should be good sailers; the *Entreprenant* is not of this description; scarce fit to be trusted through the Gut without convoy.

I assure your lordship that in all the appointments I have made, I intended to be regular as circumstances would admit of. The instance which your lordship speaks of has been my mistake; and I beg your lordship will give me credit for the intention that all my appointments, and all my proceedings, should perfectly accord with their lordships' intention. After this action, several of the ships were short of lieutenants; when the duty was hard upon them. The *Sovereign* had only six, besides my flag lieutenant; the first lieutenant dangerously wounded, and the ship needing all the assistance that could be given her. To supply those vacancies, I gave acting orders to young men who were recommended for their activity, and amongst them to a Mr. Dickinson, who I found in the *Dreadnought*, and removed with me into the *Sovereign*, because he had more knowledge of his profession than is usual, and seemed to be the spirit of the ship when anything was to be done. The *Victory's* midshipmen are most of them on board the *Queen*, and they are

the only people I feel much interest for, because they were the Victory's.

The convoy from Malta has given me much uneasiness. They were directed by the late commander-in-chief to sail on the 1st November ; I kept the Phoebe five days at Gibraltar with easterly wind, that they might join her ; they are not come yet,¹ nor have I heard anything of them. I have called upon the officers¹ to state the reasons of this apparent delay.

I have the honour . . .

COLLINGWOOD.²

[*Life of Collingwood*, p. 161.]

Queen, off Cartagena. 6th December, 1805.

I have received your lordship's letter of the 16th ult., congratulating me on the honour which his Majesty has been graciously pleased to confer upon me in advancing me to the peerage ; and I cannot sufficiently express the gratitude which I feel to my king for this distinguished mark of his royal approbation of my conduct. All the ability which God has given me is devoted to his service ; and whenever any good fortune shall place me in a situation to render benefit to his kingdoms, I trust I shall support the honour of that high station to which his Majesty has been graciously pleased to exalt me.

My family, my lord, has for several ages been of considerable distinction in the north ; but as it is now raised to a higher degree of eminence by

¹ So in MS. How the officers, who had not yet come, were called upon, does not appear.

² His first signature as a peer. The day before he still signed as a commoner.

the favour of my king, your lordship will easily conceive that I feel a degree of ambition to continue its elevation to posterity, that future Collingwoods may manifest in future ages their fidelity to their country. I have not a son ; but if the honours which have been conferred on me could be continued in the heirs of my daughters, I should be made very happy. I hope your lordship will pardon my having mentioned this subject ; but as the state of my family is probably little known to his Majesty, I have taken the liberty of putting your lordship so far in possession of the fact, and of my ardent desire on this subject.

Mr. Pitt to Lord Barham

[*Holograph.*]

Downing Street. 7th December, 1805.

My dear Lord,—I return the naval papers, on which I have nothing at present to suggest, except the adding (as I mentioned to you) the specified statement of the force intended in each station, and the general total. Lord Hawkesbury will bring you in a day or two the plan for the Order of Merit, I hope nearly in a complete state. I am taking with me the papers respecting prize money in my way to Bath and will return them immediately.

Faithfully yours,
W. PITT.

Lord Barham to Lord Collingwood

[*Autograph ; press copy.*]

Admiralty. 12th December, 1805.

My Lord,—I have received your lordship's letters by the Euryalus and Victory and shall pay proper attention to their contents. I have desired

Mr. Marsden to enclose to your lordship a list of promotions which are ordered in consequence of the late glorious victories, and which I flatter myself will give general satisfaction. Your lordship will also receive directions concerning the captured ships, and which finishes everything I have to say on this subject.

I very much approve of Sir John Duckworth's being left off Cadiz with six ships, and which will not only enable him to blockade the port, but secure him against the attack of any flying squadron that may be sent against him. The *Britannia* and *Neptune* may be sent home when you can spare them, and such other ships as require it, when effective ones will be ordered out to replace them. The *Ocean*, a very fine new ship of 98 guns, lately launched, will be forwarded to you as a flag ship as soon as she can be manned; and I hope the *Kent* and *Pompée* will be ready to sail soon. Sir Sidney Smith is to relieve Vice-Admiral Knight at Gibraltar, and the vice-admiral for the present will hoist his flag afloat.

My intention is that your lordship may have 25 effective ships of the line and as many frigates, sloops and brigs as can be spared; but your lordship must keep in mind the very great demand we have for such vessels, and the many stations and convoys which must be aided.

I have read the dispatches which your lordship forwarded from Mr. Eliot,¹ and it may be worth consideration to consult with Admiral Greig how far you may be able to assist each other by a proper disposition of the ships under your commands. We have been very fortunate in receiving all the disabled ships in safety and shall hope to get them in

¹ It is so written, but probably meant Hugh Elliot, the minister at the court of Naples. Cf. *Life of Collingwood*, pp. 188-90.

service again soon. If the Rochefort squadron (of which we know nothing) had been well directed, these ships would have been in danger ; and the opportunity was so obvious, that I wonder how they came to miss it. I have my fears, however, that they are gone to the east. I have desired the convoys may be directed to avoid the Spanish shore in their way to Gibraltar. The Anson is fitting to lay at Gibraltar ; gunboats providing for the defence of the trade.

If anything can be done for Admiral Louis's son I shall be glad, and also Lord Radstock's, who is unreasonable. In short the applications are so numerous and the means so slender, that a very great proportion of my time is lost in answering them. I count upon the Britannia and Neptune coming home when they can be spared, and probably to give security to the captured ships. I must also recommend the sending home all ships and vessels that may require considerable repairs, as the crowding Gibraltar beyond the power of the yards must impede the works carrying on in them. Whatever is sent home in this way will be immediately replaced by effectual ships.

¹ I shall expect to hear most frequently of your lordship's movements and request your returns and correspondence with the board may be as uninterrupted as possible.

² Your lordship's enclosures from Mr. Eliot are important, and are communicated to the office which they concern. The winds and weather have prevented much intercourse with the continent,

¹ A stray slip ; seems to belong to the foregoing.

² This, also a loose sheet, seems to belong to the same date as the foregoing.

[so that] as our information comes only from French [sources] there is no relying on it. I trust [however,] to the hearty concurrence of Prussia [to]¹ restore the losses on the side of Austria,¹ and that Italy may be again set free.

I am with much regard,

BARHAM.

P.S.—I flatter myself that the captured ships may not be lost to their captors.

[Autograph; press copy.] Admiralty. 2nd January, 1806.²

My Lord,—I have received by the *Entreprenant* your lordship's letters of the 4th and 5th of December and am very glad you have been able to follow your intention of appearing off Cartagena, and that the number of ships which I proposed for your command is more than sufficient for the present purposes of your station. I observe, too, what your lordship says as to frigates and smaller vessels; and have in consequence of the whole, determined to make up your numbers agreeable to the enclosed lists, and which I flatter myself you will find amply sufficient for every purpose. The number of line of battle ships now under your command, including what have sailed under Lord A. Beauclerk, is 21, and with the *Pompée*, and *Kent*, under orders to sail, will make 23.

I don't count upon the *Britannia*, *Neptune*, *Dreadnought* and *Excellent*, which I shall expect, when they can be spared to accompany the captured ships; and by the time they are ready, I shall be able to send the *Ocean* for your own flag. Agreeable to this plan you will be enabled to keep

¹ These references may be considered as fixing the date within narrow limits.

² The original has 1805.

23 sail of the line which I intend to be your established number, and send home one or more of your ships as convoy or to strengthen the captured ships, as you may see proper. As to frigates and sloops, you will, including the *Euryalus* and *Apollo* ordered to join you, have 20 frigates and near as many sloops and small vessels. So much for the force intended to be in your command.

In the blockade of Cadiz you must cause the commanding officer to beware of ships stealing occasionally out of Brest, Rochefort and Ferrol, and coming on him unawares. With this precaution, and other services provided for, it may be very advantageous to detach now and then, for a short space of time, some of your ships towards the Canaries, as I have no doubt but the destruction of the convoys will become the object of the enemies' small squadrons. It is secretly believed that large sums of money are expected from New Spain, and that the 7 sail of line of battle which lately sailed from Brest may be employed to bring it home. Sir J. B. Warren therefore is dispatched with 8 sail to visit the Windward Islands and Jamaica, and use his own discretion afterwards according to the information he may receive. Our combined convoys will sail in the course of a fortnight and have an escort superior to the French squadron. It is not improbable but Vice-Admiral Thornbrough or Sir S. Smith may accompany them as far as Madeira and join your detachment afterwards at Cadiz, and there receive your orders. This is all that strikes me on the subject of cruisers, and with regard to convoys, it must be left to your own discretion and the general orders under which Lord Nelson acted. Of this¹ you may rely, that

¹ There is here a junction of detached sheets.

the ships you send home with convoys will always be replaced by at least an equal number from hence. When Sir Sidney Smith was added to your command, it was on a supposition that Lord Northesk continued his wish of coming home, and which his lordship is at liberty to do when you send any ships to England. I thought Sir Sidney might relieve Vice-Admiral Knight at Gibraltar ; but all this you will arrange as you may see best. The Anson is fitted for a guard ship at Gibraltar, and will I hope accompany the fleet and prove sufficient for the management of the gun-boats. I have just made a minute for [Vice-] Admiral Thornbrough in the Kent and Sir Sidney in the Pompée to join you as soon as wind and weather will permit.

As soon as I see Mr. Pitt I shall communicate what you say concerning the title descending, and am, with much regard,

My lord,

Your lordship's

most obedient humble servant,

BARHAM.

Lord Hawkesbury to Lord Barham

[Holograph.]

St. James' Square.

Saturday. [January, 1806.]

My dear Lord, —I stated to-day to his Majesty the subject of the naval and military order, and I found that he considered the difficulties that belonged to some part of it of such a nature, particularly as far as related to the persons who are to have it, that in the present anxious moment he did not wish to be troubled with a decision on

¹ Endorsement, in Thomson's writing.

that in addition to all his other difficulties. I found his opinion upon essential points everything that could be wished. Perhaps under these circumstances it might be a question whether some of the existing honours should not be given to those who distinguished themselves in the late actions ; and as far as respects baronetcies, there can be no difficulty whatever.

Ever sincerely yours, my dear lord,
HAWKESBURY.

Lord Barham to Lord Collingwood

[Autograph ; press copy.
Fragment.]

[? 23rd January, 1806.¹]

. . . he has so done, return and take a station off Cape Finisterre. As this movement of Sir John Duckworth has left the port of Cadiz open, and there is an idea that money is expected from New Spain, we have detached Vice-Admiral Thornbrough to take the *Pompée* and *Illustrious* under his command and continue the blockade of Cadiz until he hears from you. You will therefore employ these ships as you may see best till the return of Sir John Duckworth, and send home the *Illustrious* when she is no longer wanted.

I am not prepared to give an opinion on the measures pursued by Sir John Duckworth, notwithstanding it has turned out so well.² If it

¹ This must be about the last letter Barham wrote while in office. The *Pompée* was still at Plymouth on the 22nd and Pitt died on the 23rd.

² The reference would seem to be to his chase of *Willaumetz* (*ante*, p. 182, and *Introd.* p. xxix). It has, of course, nothing to do with the battle of St. Domingo, fought on the 6th February, the news of which did not arrive till near the end of March.

had been done by your lordship, who have the whole subject before you, I should have had no hesitation in approving it; but if gentlemen under command, who are informed but in part, undertake such . . .

Lord Collingwood to Lord Barham

[*Life of Collingwood*, p. 181.]

Queen, at sea. 26th January, 1806.

I have every reason to believe that it is still the intention of the enemy to carry the war into the Mediterranean, which I trust I shall be able to prevent; and can assure your lordship, that I will make the best use of the force I have, and hope to defeat their purpose, whatever it may be. Yet I think that since I dispatched Sir John Duckworth, my squadron is weakened much below what is necessary for the probable service, and I am looking impatiently for something from England. I was obliged, with great reluctance, to send four of the ships to Tetuan for water, for the supply of anything by transports is tedious beyond measure. The armed defence-ships, I am afraid, will be of little use; the fleet has only been supplied with fifty bullocks by them yet, and they arrived dying with famine from the length of passage. Perhaps in the summer they may be more useful; but in the Gut those ships are not defensible with carronades, and the vessel which convoys them could bring the bullocks in half the time. In calm weather, the gun-boats unrig them with their long 24-pounders before they ever come within reach of carronades;

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and those ships, having the appearance of merchantmen, invite attack. It is activity only, and not block-ships, which can give security to the trade in Gibraltar Bay.

I have given directions to the agent for transports at Gibraltar, that no prisoner taken in a gun-boat shall be exchanged, but sent to England; for the capture of them was a mere ceremony. Exchanged the next day, on the third they might make their appearance in their former occupation, and perhaps in the same gun-boat in a month or as soon as the forms of the court of admiralty allowed her to be sold.

[*Life of Collingwood*, p. 183.]

Queen, at sea. 9th February, 1806.

I must observe that our affairs in the Mediterranean are now in such a state that a cordial and friendly intercourse with the African powers is absolutely and indispensably necessary. We may want supplies, which are no where else to be obtained, and hence the necessity of having a minister who is qualified to conciliate, and convince them that, as a French army could annihilate them as independent states in a month, a British fleet in the Mediterranean can alone protect them. Upon this station, I feel how much we are dependent upon the friendship of the Emperor of Morocco; the fleet could not exist here without the supplies which are liberally granted. Except Tetuan, there is not a place where water could be obtained; for the tanks at Gibraltar, though convenient occasionally, are quite incompetent to the general supply of the fleet.

[*Life of Collingwood*, p. 206.]

Queen. 28th March, 1806.

On the subject of the appointments, I hope your lordship will excuse my expressing my great disappointment that the only officer for whom I was particularly anxious, or whom I recommended to your lordship to be promoted, has been passed over unnoticed; and I can now say, what will scarcely be credited, and what I am willing to believe your lordship is not aware of, that I am the only commander in that fleet who has not had, by the courtesy of the admiralty, an opportunity to advance one officer of any description.

The misfortune I had in losing two friends in Captains Duff and Cooke, made it necessary that I should fill their places, which I did, as justice demanded, by promoting the first lieutenants of the *Victory* and *Royal Sovereign*. My first lieutenant stands where I placed him, in the *Weasel*, covered with his wounds, while some of those serving in private ships are post-captains.

Lieutenant Landless, the only person I recommended to your lordship, is an old and a valuable officer; he has followed me from ship to ship all the war. A complaint which he had in his eyes prevented his going into the *Sovereign* when I removed a few days before the action; but I did hope that my earnest recommendation to your lordship might have gained him favour. My other lieutenant, who removed with me into the *Sovereign*, was, happily for him, killed in the action, and thereby saved from the mortification to which, otherwise, he would probably have been subjected. The junior lieutenants who came out in the *Sovereign* were gentlemen totally unknown to me; and

as I do not know their names, I cannot tell whether they are advanced or not. The commissions sent out to me for midshipmen of that ship I have returned to the admiralty, as she is in England.

I cannot help thinking that there must have been something in my conduct of which your lordship did not approve, and that you have marked your disapprobation by thus denying to my dependents and friends what was given so liberally to other ships of the fleet ; for I have heard that the Defence and the Defiance had each of them two lieutenants promoted on the recommendation of their captains. If there was anything incorrect in me, of which your lordship disapproved, I am truly sorry for it ; but I am not conscious of what nature it can be, for my days and nights have been devoted to the service.

CORRESPONDENCE ABOUT ADMIRAL
VILLENEUVE

Sir Rupert George to Lord Barham

Transport Office. 29th November, 1805.

Sir Rupert George has the honour to send herewith for Lord Barham's information, Admiral Montagu's answer to the letter which he addressed to him by order of his lordship.

[ENCLOSURE]

Admiral Montagu to Sir Rupert George

Royal William, at Spithead.
28th November, 1805.

Sir,—I am honoured with your letter of yesterday's date communicating to me the orders you had received from Lord Barham. In reply to which I beg leave to acquaint you that upon the arrival of Admiral Villeneuve I will send my captain on board the *Euryalus* to see the paroles executed by him and his suite, and to show him such attentions as are due to his rank, as well as to explain to him that he cannot be permitted to go to London.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,
GEO. MONTAGU.

Captain Blackwood to J. D. Thomson

Portsmouth. Sunday, 8th December.

My dear Sir,—Having been so unfortunate as to be engaged, ever since my arrival, on courts martial, this has been the first day I could go to General¹ Villeneuve to communicate the instructions of government. Lord Barham must not therefore be surprised at Villeneuve's not having written. My ship is to be docked to-morrow, and by this post I ask for a fortnight's leave, which is highly necessary both for my affairs and health. I have written the letter we talked of about the Duguay Trouin, and when we meet, which I hope will be about Saturday, we shall have a little more conversation about it. I hope to get home on Wednesday, and to town on Saturday.

In haste, very much yours,

HENRY BLACKWOOD.

Vice-Admiral Villeneuve to Lord Barham

Bischof Valtham.

[Apparently Holograph.]

le 7 xbre, 1805.²

Milord,—Le capitaine Blackwood m'ayant fait connaître l'extrême bonté avec laquelle vous seriez disposé à m'accorder les demandes que je pourrais adresser à votre excellence pour adoucir ma situation pendant mon séjour en Angleterre, je n'hésite pas à lui soumettre celle

¹ It is so written.

² The date is so written, but wrongly, as Blackwood did not see him till the 8th.

dont le succès me serait d'autant plus agréable qu'elle intéresse également le sort de tous mes compatriotes qui dans cette circonstance ont partagé mon infortune.

Les officiers et les équipages français qui viennent d'être conduits dans les ports de S.M.B. ont vû leurs vaisseaux brisés sur les rochers, coulés à fond, ou dévorés par les flammes, ils sont dénués de vêtements et de tout moyen de subsistance. J'aurais infiniment à cœur que mon capitaine, M. Magendie, put être autorisé à se rendre immédiatement auprès de mon gouvernement pour exposer leur situation et en solliciter des secours. M. Magendie engagerait la parole de revenir en Angleterre à l'expiration du terme qui lui serait fixé, si quelqu'arrangement favorable n'avait pas été agréé à cette époque. Je dois ajouter que mon objet serait également de profiter de ce moyen pour adresser au ministre de S. M. l'empereur et roi les comptes personnels que je lui dois et que je n'ai pas encore pu lui faire parvenir. Si ma demande était accueillie je sentirais vivement toute l'obligation dont je serais redevable à votre excellence.

Je profite également des dispositions favorables que le capitaine Blackwood m'a exprimé de la part de V.E. pour la prier de vouloir bien fixer ma résidence définitive dans la ville de Guildford, avec les officiers qui se trouvent actuellement auprès de moi, et dont les noms sont ci-dessous. J'y joindrai le désir d'être un peu moins limité dans l'étendue qu'il nous serait permis de parcourir, ainsi que dans les heures de retraite, me rendant personnellement garant qu'aucune des personnes qui sont auprès de moi ne saurait en aucun cas en abuser.

Je prie Votre Excellence de vouloir bien agréer

les assurances de la consideration respectueuse
avec laquelle j'ai l'honneur d'être

Son très humble et très obéissant serviteur,

VILLENEUVE,¹

Vice-Admiral.

Nom des officiers qui se trouvent auprès de
l'amiral Villeneuve.

M. Infernet, capitaine de vaisseau, comman-
dant ci-devant l'Intrépide.

2 Son fils, enseigne de vaisseau.

M. Lucas, capitaine de vaisseau, idem le
Redoutable.

2 Son neveu, enseigne de vaisseau.

1 M. Magendie, capitaine de vaisseau, idem
Bucentaure.

5 Leurs domestiques et ceux de l'amiral.

10

Captain Blackwood to J. D. Thomson

Gladiator : Portsmouth Harbour.

[Monday], 9th December.

My dear Sir,—By the date you will perceive how we are engaged—most unpleasantly to me, who have a great deal on my hands. Yesterday I saw Villeneuve, and very sorry am I to be obliged to say that the sort of treatment he has experienced at Bishop's Waltham, so wide of what not only Lord Barham expressed was his wish, but also Mr. Pitt, that I was quite shocked. They have restricted him the same as they restrict the lowest officers to whom country paroles are given ; that is, ' to a mile or two about the town on the turnpike road, and a fine of a guinea if out after

¹ The whole letter, including the postscript, is in the same writing as the signature.

five o'clock P.M.' All will, however, now be well, I hope. I have tried to soften matters as much as possible, and if he gets to Guildford, where I shall be able to make him known to many gentlemen, that will do away what has hitherto occurred.

I find he declines going to London, upon an idea that it would be very expensive; but he tells me that he has requested, in the enclosed letter to Lord Barham, to get permission for his captain to go to France on parole, for the purpose of making different statements to his government, which he thinks he cannot make by letter; and also said that he hoped by this opportunity, to be able to effect an arrangement for the exchange of prisoners. My own opinion is that he is terrified at the idea of returning to France, until some friend has gone before him to feel his way; and of course he wishes to have such service performed by a man of whom he has an opinion. Captain Magendie is a man whom I think may be depended upon as to his return; and as they are all interested in a prospect of exchange, much may be done by him to effect it; and to which Villeneuve also binds himself that he should return.

I shall not be able to leave this before Thursday, although my leave will be down to-morrow.

Very truly, my dear Sir,

Your obedient and humble servant,

HENRY BLACKWOOD.

P.S.—I perceive Villeneuve has mentioned in his letter that I had given some hopes of Captain Magendie's getting leave to go to France. That is not correct, but will I think be of little consequence.

J. D. Thomson to Captain Blackwood

Admiralty. 10th December, 1805.

My dear Sir,—Lord Barham has received Admiral Villeneuve's letter and has read yours to me, and I may venture to hope that the admiral will have an answer to his satisfaction in a few posts. Excuse haste and believe me,

ever yours sincerely,

J. D. THOMSON.

Mr. Pitt to Lord Barham

[Holograph.]

Bath. 12th December, 1805.

My dear Lord,—I return the papers respecting the promotion, and Admiral Villeneuve's letter. On the first subject, I think the line seems very judiciously drawn, and as likely, as thing can be, to give satisfaction. Towards Admiral Villeneuve individually, I should certainly feel inclined to show personal attention; but even with respect to him, I should think it better that he should take up his quarters in some place in the interior, than in one on the road from Portsmouth and near one of the principal lines of defence between the coast and the capital.

With respect to the dispatches he wishes to send to his court, I should doubt whether it was desirable to let them be sent in any other mode than through the transport board (like any other communications respecting prisoners), and after government is made acquainted with their contents. Further indulgence, however glad one might be to show it, ought, I conceive, to be withheld while our countrymen continue to be treated

as they now are in France. I state this however only for consideration. Be so good to think it over, and mention the subject to any of the ministers in town; and whatever you settle I shall most readily concur in.

Ever faithfully yours,
W. PITT.

J. D. Thomson to Captain Blackwood

[Press Copy.]

Admiralty. 13th December, 1805.

My dear Sir,—I believe I have it now in my power to inform you of the sentiments of government respecting Admiral Villeneuve and his followers. They would prefer his being somewhat more to the northward, especially out of the direct line between London and Portsmouth. Of the absolute necessity of this I may take upon me to say there can be no doubt; therefore if your good offices can fix Admiral Villeneuve anywhere more consistent with the wishes of government than Guildford or its neighbourhood, yet at the same time find a situation where you can make him known to those likely to pay him attention, you will do all parties a favour. Captain Magendie will have leave to go to France on certain conditions, such as may be found to hold out a real expectation of an exchange of prisoners on terms of common interchange with nations; in which case he will have an interview with the transport board, and will have permission to come to town accordingly, as soon as the grounds of his expectation are stated.

I have just had a letter from Mr. Dalrymple stating your kind acquiescence in resolving to keep all the four boys; and, as a friend of theirs, I beg to return you my best thanks. I will

communicate the same to General Birom and Mr. Clark by this post.

If you can, I think you had better make a verbal than a written communication to General Villeneuve of the contents of this letter which I write in great haste.

I am always, my dear Sir,
Sincerely yours,
J. D. THOMSON.

Sir Rupert George to Lord Barham

Transport Office. 14th December, 1805.

My Lord,—Lord Clanricarde having called upon our agent at Bishop's Waltham to grant permission for the French Admiral Villeneuve to visit him occasionally at his lordship's house at Belmont, which is situated beyond the bounds prescribed for prisoners of war on parole, and grounded his application on a letter which he received from your lordship dated the 6th instant, I beg to be informed if it is your lordship's wish that Admiral Villeneuve should occasionally be allowed this and similar indulgences; as this board do not feel themselves authorized, under the present circumstances, to deviate from established rule without proper authority.

I have the honour to be . . .
RUPERT GEORGE.

W. Marsden to Sir Rupert George

Admiralty. December 18th, 1805.

Dear Sir,—It is the wish of his Majesty's government to extend every proper indulgence to Admiral Villeneuve and his followers consistently

with what is due to the relative situation of the two countries.

Admiral Villeneuve may therefore choose any town or village for the residence of himself and followers to the northward and westward of London, thereby avoiding any place situated in a direct line of road to the sea ports or near any of our military works or stations. Admiral Villeneuve himself and his first officer, Captain Magendie, may have permission to visit any of the neighbouring noblemen or gentry who might be disposed to show them civilities.

Captain Magendie may have permission to come to town to have a conference with your board ; and if he can show any reasonable ground to expect that an exchange of prisoners on terms of common interchange between civilised nations may be effected by his visit to France, he may have permission so to do, provided Admiral Villeneuve will be responsible for his return, and his papers be subject to inspection as usual.

I am, Sir,

WILLIAM MARSDEN.

SIR J. T. DUCKWORTH TO BARHAM

[Holograph.]

London. 5th May, 1805.

My Lord,—In the conversation your lordship honoured me with yesterday, you desired I would give you a statement of my services. As I conclude it was only with a reference to the higher parts of my services, I shall commence with having commanded the *Orion* in the first of June, and soon after removed into the *Leviathan*, when, as an apparent attention from Lord Spencer, I was ordered to take the *Hannibal* and *Swiftsure* under my command and accompany as far as Cape Finisterre, and then to cruise on my return in the Bay, which was deemed a highly favoured piece of service ; but on the night previous to this great convoy sailing under the command of Admiral Man, I received orders, to open when to the southward of Cape Finisterre, which upon doing I found directions to proceed, with my little squadron to Cape Nicola Mole, St. Domingo, victualled and stored only for Channel service, without the possibility of preparing for a foreign voyage, the rigidity of which Lord Spencer has since allowed ; but I reached my destination in 33 days from Spithead, where I continued near two years, in the first part of which I had my ship knocked to pieces at the fort of Leogane and many men killed and wounded, on which Rear-Admiral Parker¹ expressed high approbation.

¹ William Parker.

About five months afterwards, the illness of that officer caused him to return to England, the command devolving on me as senior captain, and the rear-admiral gave me a broad pennant with a captain under me,¹ and I continued in the chief command at Jamaica and St. Domingo, till Sir Hyde Parker came out and relieved me, and met with the full approbation of the admiralty. A few months afterwards, I was ordered to England with convoy and on my arrival struck my broad pennant and resumed the command of the *Leviathan*, and was put under the command of Admiral Lord Bridport and commanded a squadron of two sail of the line, with 8 frigates and smaller vessels, to watch the movements of the enemy at Brest, whilst his lordship went into port with his fleet to refit. On his return in about seven weeks, I was sent in, to victual and rejoin his lordship with all dispatch; this I did and put to sea from Cawsand Bay, with the wind at SE blowing a gale, when it was deemed impracticable.

I had not joined his lordship long, then in October, when I received orders to take the *Cumberland* with me and proceed 20 leagues to the NW before I opened other orders, which were to go to Bantry Bay, where the *Centaur* and *Montagu* and, soon after, three frigates were ordered to join me; to cruise, in the depth of winter, for the protection of that part of Ireland, and never to lose sight of the land. On this service I continued till Rear-Admiral Curtis arrived with four sail of the line more, and took me under his command, from whence he was soon dispatched under secret orders to join Lord St. Vincent off Cadiz, where I continued commanding the in-shore

¹ This was then the usual way of describing a commodore of the first class.

squadron till October, when I was ordered by signal to weigh and close with the admiral, when he directly came on board, hoisted his flag and proceeded to Gibraltar, when on our arrival he acquainted me it was his intentions I should command an expedition in consort with General Stuart for the attack of Minorca.

On this service I proceeded in a few days, and was fortunate enough to fall in with the intended place of landing at daylight in the morning, where we found the enemy too strong to attempt it and proceeded to a bay about six miles distant and had a battalion on shore by 8 o'clock that morning. It will here be sufficient to say that in 8 days we were in possession of the island, in which, the military will admit, the navy had at least their share; for which my colleague was honoured with a red ribbon,¹ but the navy received no mark of attention. This I remonstrated about with Lord Spencer, who admitted the right, and assured me of his Majesty's approbation, but without granting the honour his Majesty's ministers had marked my right to.

From this service I was ordered to join Lord Nelson² with four sail of the line, to enable him to oppose the French force. This force having got out of the Mediterranean, I was ordered to return to Minorca, and soon after removed to cruise off Cadiz with a squadron and to carry on the service at Gibraltar; but in November, I received orders from the admiralty to proceed with five sail of the line and cruise off Ferrol, to watch a Spanish squadron of six sail of the line. Here I continued nine weeks till, from the severity

¹ *Sc.* the order of the Bath.

² He was thus with Nelson in the Bay of Naples in the summer of 1799.

of the weather, two of my squadron were forced to go to England in distress, viz. *Powerful* and *Vanguard*; and *Bellerophon* and *Swiftsure* to Lisbon, so that for the last 16 days I had only the *Flora* frigate in company. After fulfilling this service I returned off Cadiz, where, in a little more than two months, I saw the Lima convoy outward bound, said to consist of two ships of the line and a frigate; chased them till the third day, in which the *Swiftsure* parted company, and I had only the *Emerald* frigate in company, when I got near two frigates at two o'clock in the morning and kept company with them without commencing any action till daybreak, for fear of dispersing the convoy, and then it appeared there were only three frigates with 15 sail of merchant vessels, 11 of which, with two of the frigates, were captured, and after seeing them safe to Gibraltar, I returned directly off Cadiz, where I continued to cruise till the 5th of June, when to my surprise I was joined by Rear-Admiral Sir Richard Bickerton, who delivered me a commission to proceed to command on the Leeward Island station.

This, though unsolicited and unexpressed, I felt honourable and a strong testimony of Lord Spencer's kindness, and without delay put in execution my orders to relieve Lord Hugh Seymour, when after having been there seven months, I received orders to accompany Lieutenant General Trigge with what troops he could collect, and three regiments which were on their passage, to take possession of the Swedish and Danish islands in that sea; and after having seized on St. Bartholomew, I prevailed on my colleague, though not in our orders, to take the French island of St. Martin's, as otherwise from its contiguity to the islands above-mentioned the French would be

likely to give us great trouble, and probably dispossess us of some of them. After having taken that island and those of St. Thomas, St. John's, St. Croix and its dependencies and garrisoned them, in 11 days, we returned again to Martinique, when his Majesty honoured me with the red ribbon ; and I continued there, receiving testimonies of approbation from our own islands till the preliminaries of peace were signed, when I applied to the admiralty to be relieved whenever consistent with the good of the king's service.

Judge then, my lord, what must be my astonishment on the 10th of January 1802, less than three months after this application, without any previous intimation, to see Rear-Admiral Totty arrive to relieve me, bringing a commission for me to be commander-in-chief at Jamaica ; and soon after, a letter referring me, in answer to my application, to the directions I had received to go to Jamaica ; though soon after, Lord St. Vincent honoured me with an explanatory letter that as the service at Jamaica would be highly momentous from the French being in the act to send out a great force to St. Domingo, he had recommended me to his Majesty for the performance of it ; and in the course of three months I had 72 sail of pennants—28 of the line—under my command, as had the French 29 ; but as the French reduced their force, I did the same ; and in October 1802, I was reduced to 8 sail of the line, when I again solicited the admiralty to relieve me, and received an answer expressing surprise, as it would be injurious to the service ; but said means should be taken. However 8 months elapsed and no relief, when the French war commenced, and I was, in course, without a wish to return, seeing the face of things were thus changed. I therefore

continued, using my exertions to distress the enemy; and by cutting off their supplies caused them to evacuate all their posts in that island; in doing which, my squadron captured a line of battleship, four frigates of 38 guns, a corvette with 18 prs., a 20-gun ship, 7 brigs of war, and destroyed one; also seven national schooners, two cutters and eleven privateers have been taken and sunk; add to this, I have had more than 11,000 prisoners to find means for, the labour of which few constitutions could have gone through.

Having thus stated to your lordship the outline of my services, as you desired, I now come to the painful recital of my recall at a moment when it was known that hostilities were likely to take place with another power. This operates most particularly upon my feelings, as when the world see the state of health in which I have returned, it will naturally produce censure for my leaving such service in time of war, or else that I must have committed error to cause me to be relieved at such a period by a junior officer. As I confidently believe your lordship knows, neither of these cases are applicable to me, though in the eye of my king and country, corroborated by my being arraigned on my arrival as a criminal at a court martial,¹ yet I think your lordship will see and allow, that not even the handsome resolve of the House of Assembly of Jamaica, or the address of

¹ Duckworth returned in the *Acasta*, from which he removed the captain, J. Athol Wood, in favour of his flag-captain. Wood came home a passenger in the *Acasta*, and immediately charged Duckworth with tyranny, oppression, and trading. There was no doubt that the *Acasta* had brought home many articles of merchandise; but the court that enquired into the affair, accepted Duckworth's declaration that they were for presents, not for sale, and pronounced the charges 'gross, scandalous, malicious, shameful, and highly subversive of discipline.'

every parish in that valuable colony with regret and concern at my departure, will be sufficient to convince the public of my rectitude, without his Majesty's ministers do me the honour to recommend me to him for some hereditary mark of his gracious favour. I therefore shall only intrude on your lordship with adding that, after more than 46 years' service with reputation, and never unemployed, but whilst a post captain in time of peace, when I had not interest to procure a ship, it cannot be but highly painful and injurious to my feelings to have my character at a moment like this, lessened in the eyes of my king and country.

I have the honour to be, with high respect,
my lord . . .

J. T. DUCKWORTH.

Stoke, Plymouth. 13th May, 1805.

My Lord,—As I have the authority of one of your lordship's oldest friends to say no man is more acute in the feelings of character than your lordship, I trust you will not deem me presumptive in resuming a subject I, at your lordship's desire, gave you a detail of on the 5th instant, and adding that, independent of the solicitude I expressed, that your lordship would honour me with your support in obtaining some hereditary mark of his Majesty's favour, to dispel the cloud which is felt the late admiralty have so harshly endeavoured to throw over me by a recall [such as] I now understand from some of the highest officers, never before occurred with a commander-in-chief when in time of war, without being charged with error. I therefore still look to your lordship for the protection of my character, and had I come home in the common mode of service, I should have hoped the first lord of the admiralty would

have considered a continuance abroad, in peace, contrary to my particular application; but to execute service expressed by the then first lord to be highly momentous, at the injury of my private fortune, without considering the risk of constitution, in such a climate, with 28 sail of the line, and 72 sail of pennants, that I should even then [have] expected to have been honoured with that attention from his Majesty's ministers; I therefore flatter myself your lordship will not admit I ought to be visited by punishment for services acknowledged by the admiralty and those I was sent to protect, to have been justly executed. Though I trust I have evinced to the admiralty and my country, that the malice of my late prosecutor is beneath my notice, yet, as I ever must feel for the flag I have the honour to bear, I think myself called upon to recite to your lordship that the night of the 9th, just as I was leaving town, I was served with a writ at his suit; and on my arrival here I found he had followed up his wicked conduct, and a charge had been sent to the Custom House to watch most narrowly the landing of my stores; an inference, my lord, highly invidious to an officer just returned from a command wherein the interest of our country was judged most particularly concerned, to deem me capable of defrauding his Majesty's revenue.

I have the honour to be with great respect . . .

*Lord Barham to Sir J. T. Duckworth*¹

[Signed; press copy.]

Admiralty. 22nd October, 1805.

Sir,—As Sir Robert Calder is hourly expected to arrive in England, I begin to feel extremely

¹ So endorsed.

anxious for your joining the fleet off Cadiz as soon as possible. In case, therefore, that the *Acasta* does not come in the interim (and it is difficult to account for the delay, as she appears in Admiral Cornwallis' disposition to have been ordered in on 29th September), the *Powerful*, now in the Downs, is ordered to Plymouth, there to be fitted for foreign service with the view of her joining Lord Nelson's fleet, and I must request you to hold yourself in readiness to go out in her accordingly. Lord Nelson will have the necessary instructions for appropriating an eligible three decker for your flag on your arrival, and the *Acasta* on her arrival will be ordered to follow, as she is intended to be attached to his lordship's fleet.

I remain . . .

BARHAM.

[Signed; press copy.]

Admiralty. 23rd October, 1805.

Sir,—In consequence of intelligence just received (a copy of which is enclosed), we find the Rochefort squadron still at sea and doing mischief to the trade; we have therefore thought it of the first consequence to send you out immediately with the ships named on the other side,¹ which are ordered to join you at Plymouth with all possible dispatch, and proceed with them according to the information contained in Captain Lobb's letter, and cruise for at least three weeks on such ground as you think most likely to intercept them.

In case of meeting with Sir Richard Strachan, who is at sea with a similar squadron, you will direct him to continue his pursuit for the same

¹ Not pressed. Added here from a draft.

space of time; and on the expiry of this period you are to proceed yourself, with the Powerful, Superb, Chiffonne and Minorca, to join Lord Nelson; sending the Eagle, Saturn, Intrepid and such other as may be attached to you for this service back to Admiral Cornwallis off Ushant, the Curieux brig excepted, which you are to send to join Captain Lobb's squadron on the coast of Portugal.

As it will not be possible to send the Intrepid in time, Admiral Cornwallis has orders to make up your force to six sail of the line; but if Admiral Young has it in his power to effect this by placing any two ships which may accidentally come into Plymouth under your command, you will not have occasion to trust to Admiral Cornwallis for this addition.

I am, Sir,

Your faithful, humble servant,
BARHAM.

Powerful, Saturn, Superbe, Eagle, Chiffonne and Minorca. Intrepid cannot be depended on. Admiral Cornwallis will make up the deficiency.

Letters, of the same date, were sent to Admiral Young at Plymouth and Admiral Cornwallis off Ushant, acquainting them with the tenour of these orders and desiring them to give Duckworth all possible assistance.

Sir J. T. Duckworth to Lord Barham

[Holograph.]

Plymouth Dock. 24th October, 1805.

My Lord,—I am just honoured with your lordship's letter kindly signifying the motives

which cause you to be desirous I should join Lord Nelson in the *Powerful*, should the *Acasta* not return into port and be in readiness before her, and I beg you to be assured that not a moment's delay shall occur on my part to fulfil your commands; but I hope your lordship will forgive my repeating the anxious solicitude I must be under for my captain, officers, and some of my essential comforts that are in the *Acasta*, as proceeding to hoist my flag in a ship where I am an entire stranger cannot tend to promote the public service.

I have the honour to be, with great respect,
my lord . . .

J. T. DUCKWORTH.

Lord Barham to Sir J. T. Duckworth

[*Autograph; press copy.*] Admiralty. 25th October, 1805.

Sir,—Notwithstanding our order to continue your pursuit of the *Rochefort* squadron for the space of three weeks, and to communicate the same to Sir John Strachan if you meet, you are, in case of receiving actual intelligence of their being returned to port, to proceed immediately to join Lord Nelson with the *Superb*, *Powerful*, *Chiffone* and *Minorca*, and send the others home agreeable to the order you have already received.

I am, Sir . . .

[*Signed; press copy.*] Admiralty. 28th October, 1805.

Sir,—You will see from the public orders that in consequence of the alteration which has taken place, you are now to proceed with the *Superb*, *Powerful*, and *Acasta* (if ready) to join Lord

Nelson direct, and that your request to have your flag in the *Superb*, instead of the *Powerful*, has been acceded to. You will however not delay your sailing should the *Acasta* not be ready, as she can be ordered to follow as soon as ready.

I am, Sir . . .

Sir J. T. Duckworth to Lord Barham

[*Holograph.*]

Superb, off the town of St. Dominique.

7th February, 1806.

My Lord,—As I have endeavoured through the secretary from time to time to make the L.C.A. fully acquainted with my proceedings, and of my having detached the *Powerful* on the 2d of the year from off the Cape Verd Island St. Antonio to Sir Edward Pellew, I shall not, at a moment of joy like this, intrude on your lordship with a recital of chagrin and disappointment I have experienced, but offer your lordship my warmest congratulation on the complete destruction of the French squadron, as recited in my public letter of this day, which will be delivered by Captain Cochrane of the *Kingsfisher*, nephew to the rear-admiral who so gallantly supported me, and I doubt not your lordship will honour him with rank.

When speaking on this subject your lordship will be aware [of] the many meritorious services I must have to distinguish after so glorious and complete a conquest ; I therefore feel called upon by duty and every sense of gratitude for his services to point out to your lordship that Rear-Admiral Louis, who after all his labours was unfortunate enough to be separated from his much

to be lamented friend Lord Nelson, has a son commander of the *Bittern*, who I trust your lordship will allow to participate in his father's laurels, by giving him post rank.

I must next, in justice to the very able support I received from Captain Keats, particularly mark Mr. Charles Gill the first lieutenant, who has served near five years in that situation, and a more able, gallant, and zealous officer I have never seen. I therefore, without presuming to solicit anything incorrect, hope your lordship will feel it in your power to give him post rank; but if incompatible with your rules, to give him a good ship. The second lieutenant of this ship, in whom, as he also has never served with me, I can have no interest but from his merits, has a claim to all your lordship can do. Being unfortunately separated from all my own officers, and not having one of those about me who have followed my fortunes in all other instances, I am to offer an expectation of your lordship's goodness to take care of some of them.

As the multiplicity of avocations which call upon me will not admit of my transcribing this letter, I hope the circumstances of the moment will plead for any inaccuracies. And I have the honour to be, with great respect, my Lord,

your lordship's most obedient,
and faithful, humble servant

J. T. DUCKWORTH.

[*Holograph.*] Superb, off St. Dominique. 8th February, 1806.

My Lord,—Since I had the honour of writing you yesterday, Captain Dunn of the *Acasta* has secured the prisoners in the French wrecks, and though the sea run very high, has completely set them on fire, and they are now burning gloriously. In consequence of the dangerous state of that

gallant youth, the son of the valuable Lord Hugh Seymour, I have appointed him to act in the command of the *Kingsfisher*, and charged Captain Cochrane, late of that sloop, to convey my dispatches, which I anxiously hope may meet your lordship's approbation.

I have the honour to be, with great respect, my Lord . . .

Rear-Admiral Cochrane to Lord Barham

Northumberland, off the City of St. Domingo.
9th February, 1806.

My Lord,—I have the honour to congratulate your lordship on the victory of the sixth, which has had the effect to deprive the enemy of five of their capital¹ ships. Sir John Duckworth, whose conduct I cannot too much admire, will of course give a detail to the admiralty of his proceedings. I will therefore not take up your lordship's time further than by saying that as the glory was to fall to another's share, I am happy that it has rested on his shoulders. The delicacy with which he has acted to me claims my warmest thanks and I feel grateful for the permission he gave me to accompany him to leeward.

The *Atlas* is gone to Jamaica in a disabled state; if she ever returns it cannot be before some months to come. The *Northumberland* will require great repairs, as all the masts, etc., etc., are destroyed. She is much injured in the hull and cannot be made an effective ship for a length of time. The crew was greatly reduced by sickness before the action; I therefore beg that a few marines and seamen may be sent out by the first

¹ The use of the word at this date is noteworthy.

ships. The small vessels get men, but none will enter for a line of battle ship ; and as the merchant ships that arrive from England are now almost entirely navigated by foreigners or invalids, our recruit from thence is but small.

I mean to proceed direct to Barbados in a frigate as soon as we reach Antigua.

I have the honour to be . . .

ALEXR. COCHRANE.

*Lord Barham to Sir J. T. Duckworth*¹

[Autograph.]

Barham Court. 24th March, 1806.

Dear Sir,—I thank you for your good news and notwithstanding the city of London are thanking his Majesty for changing his ministers, men of reflection will at least own we have been fortunate.

I have returned the letters directed to Mr. Grey and have desired him to give them to Mr. Marsden when he has done with them ; you will of course receive them from him. I have no doubt everything will turn out for the best in the East Indies, and if we had been left to ourselves for another twelve months, it is probable we should have been the means of annihilating our enemy's fleet. If Mr. Stephens² was to put into his note the enemy's ships that have been destroyed and captured for the last ten months, it would be as good a picture as could be drawn of our diligence.

Yours faithfully,

BARHAM.

¹ So endorsed by Thomson.

² James Stephen, author of the well-known pamphlet, *War in Disguise*. About a month before this, he had written to Barham asking for some statistics to insert in the 3rd edition, then passing through the press. * See *D.N.B.*

CORRESPONDENCE IN RETIREMENT

Lord Barham to J. D. Thomson[*Extract. Holograph.*] Barham Court. 4th April, 1806.

Dear Sir,—Having now a little time for reflection I could wish to bring my writing matters into a little order, and beg you will at leisure arrange my papers that are in town so that I may return them into my alphabet press. If a bit of tape is tied round each parcel, I shall the easier arrange them.

Mr. Pitt's letters, the king's notes and any others from ministers, Dukes of York, etc., and admirals, will be proper to have in my possession. The Secretary of State's letter for paying the Boulogne expenses and for advancing money to Sir Sidney Smith are necessary papers, and it is possible, I may be called to account for ordering it; and also the copy of the orders for your expenses prior to the establishment for the board of revisal.

When you have received my salary, half-pay, and old stores, you will have the kindness of paying it into Childs' and send me an account of each, and pay yourself whatever I may be in your debt. I wish too to have my large seal.

It will be very convenient for me when I can withdraw myself from all restriction of office. The price of attendance is too great where no good is to follow it. . . .¹

¹ The rest of the letter, about half of which is here printed, is devoted to private and family affairs.

[Holograph. Extract.]

Barham Court.

Saturday, 3rd May, [1806].¹

I was at the House of Lords yesterday, and shall, if I am able, attend again next week. Poor Lord Melville looked thin and languid and which I cannot wonder at. The examination I heard was trifling.

Lord Mulgrave to Lord Barham

[Holograph.]

Admiralty. 23rd June, 1807.

My dear Lord,—I understand from Captain Blackwood that Mr. Pitt had something in his contemplation for that officer as a reward for his services, and that your lordship had determined to carry the object into effect, and, as I understand, either had spoken or had intended to speak to the king on the subject. As it ever must be my wish to fulfil any intention of Mr. Pitt, and to complete any measure of yours, especially where the reward of distinguished service is the end in view, I beg to be informed by your lordship what the joint intention of yourself and Mr. Pitt was, and on what grounds it was entertained.²

I am, with great truth and regard, my dear Lord,

Yours very sincerely and faithfully,

MULGRAVE.

¹ So endorsed.

² Barham's answer to this does not appear; but Blackwood—who had lately been burnt out of the Ajax, and had arrived in England about a month before—having declined the post of pay-commissioner at the navy-board, was appointed to the command of the Warspite. See *D.N.B.*

L.C.A. TO ADMIRAL GAMBIER

Orders for the expedition that resulted in the bombardment of Copenhagen and the seizure of the Danish fleet.¹

21st July, 1807.

Whereas, from the unfortunate events which have recently taken place in the north of Europe, and which have led to an armistice between Russia and France ; and the avowed designs of the enemy, by the unrestrained exercise of his power, in contempt of the rights of all neutral nations, to exclude as widely as possible, his Majesty's subjects from all intercourse with the continent :—We have thought fit to appoint you commander-in-chief of a fleet of his Majesty's ships and vessels intended to be employed in the Baltic ; and whereas the Right Honourable Lord Castlereagh, one of his Majesty's principal secretaries of state, hath, by his letter of the 18th instant, signified to us, his Majesty's pleasure that we should instruct the officer in the command of the said fleet, to direct his attention, on his arrival in the Baltic, to the following objects :—

~~First~~ First—To co-operate with his Majesty's ally, the king of Sweden, for the security of his dominions.

Secondly—To protect any reinforcements which it may be necessary to send to Pomerania, or to cover the return of his Majesty's troops, in the event of its being thought expedient to withdraw them from thence.

Thirdly—To secure against all annoyance the large mass of British property which is now afloat

¹ Barham had, of course, nothing to do with this, but—as Gambier's uncle—had obtained a copy.

in the Baltic, and to preserve to this country an uninterrupted commercial intercourse, and supply of naval stores from the Baltic.

We do, in pursuance of his Majesty's pleasure signified to us as aforesaid, hereby require and direct you, on your arrival in the Baltic, to use your best endeavours by every means in your power, to attain the objects abovementioned; and also to obey all such orders and instructions as you may, from time to time, receive from his Majesty, through his principal secretary of state for the war department, for the direction of your conduct in the service on which you are employed.

MULGRAVE.

R. BICKERTON.

W. J. HOPE.

Lord Barham to J. D. Thomson

[*Holograph. Extract.*] Barham Court. 5th August, 1807.

Dear Sir,—I am afraid I shall be called to town to sign the victualling report. In this case I shall be glad to get rid of this secret service money and will thank you to prepare what is necessary for my appearance before the Baron of Exchequer. It will be a great ease to my mind when I have got rid of all public business, but I fear there will be no end of it, as Mr. Fordyce's health will oblige him to leave town and I am by no means prepared nor able to take an active part in what remains to be done. You know my astonishment at the value of lands in Scotland; all I can say is, that I would not let the favourable moment pass for getting a fair price for yours. As my things are in Wimpole Street, I shall not wish to move them for the very short time I shall be in town, and I write Mrs. House accordingly.

ADMIRALTY MINUTE

18th June, 1808.

Admiral Lord Collingwood to be acquainted that it is probable his Holiness the Pope may endeavour to effect his escape from the States of the Church recently usurped by Bonaparte, and direct him to station such frigates as he may be able to spare at such points on the coast of Italy as, from intelligence he may receive of his Holiness' movements, are most likely to facilitate the object in view; with directions to their captains to receive him and his followers on board, and convey him to [England]¹ such place of destination as he shall point out, paying every possible attention to him during his continuance on board.

Lord Collingwood to Lord Barham

[Holograph.]

Ville de Paris. 24th August, 1809.

My Lord,—I have received the honour of your lordship's letter, and Mr. Noel delivered to me your note. I beg your lordship to be assured of the pleasure it would give me to comply with your wish to advance your grandson. I have had some conversation with Mr. Noel on the subject of his removal, and cannot but recommend to your lordship that he remains a little longer in the *Tigre*—a ship in which such a complete regard is paid to the instruction of youth—which must be particularly advantageous to him from the circumstance of his having come late into the service; and really so many misfortunes have happened from the inexperience of young officers that I think

¹ 'England,' written in first, is deleted.

at so early a period of life he had better not be exposed to them. It is astonishing what numbers of them are gone to Heaven and Verdun, from the sole circumstance of not being capable of taking care of their ships—or the vessels they were put into—and what numbers of men they have taken with them. I assure your lordship that there is not any situation in which he could be placed that would afford him such advantages, at present, as where he is, with Captain Hallowell.

I have the honour to be . . .

COLLINGWOOD.

Lord Barham to J. D. Thomson

[Holograph.]

Brighton. 15th September, 1812.

Dear Sir,—Since I wrote you last, I have received a card from Lord Melville informing me of Mr. Riddel's being appointed clerk of the rope-yard at Portsmouth, and which I beg you will thank his lordship kindly for.

You are as well acquainted as I am with the origin of the board of revisal and the latitude that was allowed in finding proper persons to compose the office. Amongst these Riddel was recommended as a most useful person and proved so. The office allotted to him was a very laborious one; and even before its establishment, he was employed both night and day with yourself, in preparing matter for its commencement. The only thing that offered in Riddel's favour during my presiding at the admiralty, was the store-keeper at Falmouth, at I think £400 a year and a clerk at £150, but without houses as in the dock-yards. The establishment since that time has been broke up, and Mr. Riddel reduced to £200

a year and his clerk to £50. I felt very strongly this reduction of salaries, because the public faith was broken through me. What followed, you are no stranger to. If Lord Melville had continued in office, he would have made good all our engagements; as I should have done, if Mr. Pitt had survived some time longer. They are not numerous, and might have been easily satisfied. What the present Lord Melville has done for Riddel, his worthy father, our esteemed friend, would have done, had he continued in office; as it is, I feel thankful for it.

I return to Barham Court on Friday. Pettitt is serving as captain's clerk on board of one of the king's ships, and which is the proper channel for a purser. I have wrote to his uncle to acquaint you with particulars. These are all the claims that I know of, on the score of the board of revisal, unsatisfied.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

BARHAM.

LORD MELVILLE TO BARHAM

Admiralty. 10th October, 1812.

My dear Lord,—We are indeed unaccustomed to discomfiture at sea, and I regret the late capture of the *Guerrière* much less on account of the mere loss of the ship, than from its shaking our confidence in the superiority of our largest class of frigates over any other frigates whatever, even the strong American vessels of that description. Sir John Warren has with him the *San Domingo* and *Poitiers* of 74 guns and the *Africa* of 64, and ten of our largest frigates, all on the

Halifax station; he also carried out with him authority to take the Dragon of 74 from the Leeward Islands, which we have replaced by a 50-gun ship. Sir John Duckworth has also his 50-gun ship and three of our largest class of frigates at Newfoundland; so that the American coast is not quite safe to American cruisers. We must keep them under, let our exertions be ever so great or inconvenient to us in other respects. Believe me, with great regard, my dear lord, . . .

MELVILLE.

With such a force, which must be increased if necessary, our frigates might certainly cruise in pairs.¹

LORD BARHAM TO J. D. THOMSON

[*Endorsed by Thomson*: Amongst the last of his letters to J. D. T.]

[*Holograph.*²]

Barham Court, 19th April, 1813.

Dear Sir,—I have just learnt from Charles that he continues here till this day se'ennight, viz. Monday—and he thinks Dr. Macleod³ will be down this week. If you can come, therefore, during that time, I shall be very glad to see you.

Yours sincerely,

BARHAM.

Gerard will be here. Macleod goes down, I believe, at the end of the week.

¹ Cf. *ante*, vol. i. (*N.R.S.*, xxxii.), 302 and *note*.

² As firm and clear as twenty or thirty years earlier.

³ Roderick Macleod, D.D., husband of Barham's niece Helen, an Episcopalian clergyman (though a graduate of Aberdeen), and for forty years (1806-45) rector of St. Anne's, Soho.

ADDITIONAL

EXAMINATION OF OFFICERS

This memorandum, not dated, must have been drawn up while Middleton was at the navy board, which had the conduct of the Examinations of Officers, and may be considered as marking the standard aimed at, 1780-90.

You are sent to a ship ordered to be fitted out, the Captain not having appeared; the lower masts and bowsprit are in, but not rigged: What part of the rigging goes first over the mast heads?

How is the bowsprit secured so as to be the chief support of the foremast?

What are the means used to put the caps upon the lower masts?

Upon going out of a refitting harbour and coming to an anchor in such a road as Spithead, is there anything absolutely necessary to the safety of the ship after she is moored, in case of a gale of wind?

You are supposed to have a new ship's company. What is the first thing necessary to make your ship able to resist an enemy?

Upon receiving orders to sail from Spithead, with a south-east wind, at what time of tide will you begin to unmoor that you may have the advantage of it in plying down to St. Helens?

What officers will you send for, and what

directions will you give them when the ship is to be unmoored ?

How are your officers and men to be stationed at this time ?

How will you brace your yards in order to cast your ship to starboard ?

Your ship is almost a-peak upon your last anchor : give the necessary orders for weighing, for stowing the anchor, and getting under sail.

You are now at sea with all your sails set, close by the wind : give the necessary directions and tack the ship.

Your sails are still all set ; the wind begins to freshen : what sails will you take in first ?

Your small sails being taken in, the wind still freshens : give the necessary directions and shorten sail farther.

Your topsails being close reefed, give the orders necessary upon taking one of them in.

Upon taking in a topsail when it blows hard, is there any precaution necessary to secure the lower yard ? If there is, what is it ?

Is there any farther security used to preserve the lower yards than the lifts and braces, in a gale of wind ? If there is, what is it ?

Your ship being now under courses, you are supposed to be in such a situation as to oblige you to wear : give the proper orders, and wear your ship.

Your courses being again set, the wind increases so as to oblige you to reef them : what is necessary upon this occasion, and how will you proceed to haul one of them up ?

Your ship being under bare poles, use the best means to get her before the wind.

In a violent gale of wind, you are supposed to be obliged to return to a road, in which every

precaution will be necessary to make the ship ride : what orders will you give for this purpose ?

Your ship not bringing up, and danger near you to leeward, it is found necessary to cut away some of your masts, but proper to preserve one ; what mast would you wish to save ?

Your ship is again supposed to be at sea, with her topsails set, right before the wind : give the proper directions and make all the sail you can.

An enemy is observed : give orders for clearing your ship, and make the necessary preparations for engaging.

The enemy's ship having hauled the wind upon the starboard tack, your studding sails being still all set, haul them down properly and bring your ship to the wind upon the same tack.

In endeavouring to tack after the enemy you find your ship will not stay : use the method commonly practised to get her upon the other tack, losing as little time and way as possible.

Having again got your ship with all her sails set close by the wind and in chase, you are taken aback by a sudden change of the wind and likely to be put upon the other tack, which must be avoided. What means will you use for this purpose ?

What precautions will you use to prevent any accident happening from powder blowing up in time of action ?

Is there any other security used for the lower deck guns, besides the tackles and breechings, when the ship has a great deal of motion, or when you suspect there is danger of their breaking loose ? If there is, what is it ?

In sailing close by the wind in a fresh breeze and smooth water, how would you wish your ship should carry her helm ?

THE THOMSON PAPERS

The volume was complete to this point when the Editor learned that some of the papers of Sir J. Deas Thomson were still extant, in the possession of his granddaughter, Mrs. Stirling, widow of Vice-Admiral Frederick Henry Stirling (*d.* 1885). By Mrs. Stirling's kindness and liberality he has been permitted to examine these papers, and to print such of them as are of the date of this volume. It has been, unfortunately, impracticable to insert them in their proper place; but they are here given, with a reference to the page to which they belong.

Memorandum

[*Autograph.*]

Admiralty. 3rd July, 1805.¹

The clerks to be informed that I expect an immediate answer to such minutes as come from me, if the nature of them will admit of it; and where any unnecessary delay happens, I shall expect to hear the reason in writing.

BARHAM.

Admiral Cornwallis to Lord Barham

Ville de Paris, off Brest.

Noon, 11th July, 1805.

Dear Lord Barham,—I have this moment had the honour of receiving your lordship's letter dated the 9th,² and I have sent the necessary directions to Rear Admiral Stirling to join Sir Robert Calder, and for them to cruise, as your lordship directs, 30 or 40 leagues to the

¹ *Ante*, p. 87.

² See *ante*, p. 258.

westward, to endeavour to intercept the enemy's returning squadron.

I have, since I received the intelligence, kept, with the ships present, farther to the westward, and intended, with a westerly wind, to continue in a position to intercept the enemy, should they make for the port of Brest.

I have the honour to be, with the greatest respect . . .

W. CORNWALLIS.

Lord Keith to Lord Barham

20th July, 1805.¹

My Lord,—I have the honour to enclose Admiral Holloway's letter and account of the business on the other side, which is to be lamented, but it is impossible to let large numbers of them pass along the shore unmolested. I have sent the *Immortalité* to the *Little Nore* to get a mast. The *Downs* is not a fit place to hoist out and in masts, and loses time. The whole of the enemy's forces is now concentrated at Boulogne, Wimereux and Ambleteuse. I shall get the Russian information in a day or two, but the gentleman in question cannot come forward personally. I have the honour to be . . .

KEITH.

Lord Nelson to Lord Barham

Victory: Spithead. 18th August, 1805.²

My Lord,—I shall take the earliest opportunity in my power to pay my personal respects to you at the admiralty. I am not very stout, as you

¹ *Ante*, p. 139.

² *Ante*, p. 311. The official letters of this date are in Nicolas, vii. 8 *seq.*

will see, but I flatter myself my hectic may not be too far gone but that a little rest and native air will restore me to the service of my king and country.

Should it be judged necessary to appoint an acting captain to the Victory, I should wish to recommend Captain John Conn, late of the Canopus, so that in case I should go to sea upon an emergency before good Captain Hardy joins, that I may not be with a perfect stranger. Should this arrangement meet your lordship's approbation I shall be glad. I am,

With the greatest respect,

Your lordship's most faithful

and obedient servant,

NELSON AND BRONTE.

Minute by Barham. To be complied with.

Minute by Garlies. August 20. Captain J. Conn appointed acting captain of Victory accordingly. G.

Lord Nelson to J. D. Thomson

Merton. 5th September, 1805.¹

My dear Sir,—I feel much obliged by your note, and I can assure you there is not one of my appointments that are not most strictly regular, and all the appointments are before the board, therefore I rely will be confirmed.

I thank you for your notice of the ships put under my command and I shall endeavour to use them. Captain P. Campbell has wrote requesting my getting him with me; and my want of frigates, when I come to point out the services from Cape St. Vincent to Constantinople and to Venice, will be found very short; but I shall not

¹ *Ante*, p. 315.

complain, relying on Lord Barham's kind attention. The enemy have a shoal of frigates with their fleet, and other small vessels which will take crippled ships in tow. My motto shall be *Touch and Take*.

Ever your much obliged

NELSON AND BRONTE.

The Rt. Hon. George Rose to Lord Barham

[Holograph.]

Cuffnells. 7th November, 1805.¹

My dear Lord,—While you are receiving congratulations, to which you are well entitled, from all your friends, on the late most glorious and brilliant victory, you will, I am sure, forgive me for mixing with mine deep and sincere sorrow for the loss of the hero to whom we are, in some measure at least, indebted for it. I went over, at his desire, to dine with him at Saint Helen's the day before he sailed, when he spoke of your reception of him and the exertions you had made to strengthen the fleet he was to command, in terms deeply affecting.

I should not, however, have intruded on your time at such a moment as this, but to mention to you what I should never have done if Lord Nelson had lived—his intention to promote Captain Strachey of the *Jalouse* to the rank of post, and Mr. Lyons, a midshipman in the *Victory*, to the rank of lieutenant, [as] will appear in the enclosed letter² from him; but I suppose the *Jalouse* was not in the fleet, though she was sent to the Mediterranean two years ago expressly to put Captain Strachey in the way of promotion from

¹ *Ante*, p. 331.

² Presumably that of 29th August, printed in *Nicolas*, vii. 19.

Lord Nelson. His lordship asked me, at parting, if I could not get Captain Strachey put on the admiralty list, and I told him that having requested that for my nephew, Captain Duer,¹ I could not attempt it.

Have the goodness to let the enclosed be returned to me. I fear my poor friend did not find time to sit to Edridge² for me.

I remain, my dear lord,

Most truly yours,

GEORGE ROSE.

Memorandum for J. D. Thomson

[Autograph. Extract.]

1806.³

As Lord Barham leaves town on Friday, and there will naturally be letters at the admiralty for some time directed for him, he has desired Mr. Marsden to forward them after to-morrow to Mr. Thomson at the navy office. As those letters are of a public nature, and Mr. Thomson is better acquainted with the subject of them than Lord Barham, he begs the favour to give proper answers to them and send only to Lord B. what personally relates to himself. He will likewise see such persons as are connected with Lord Barham and assist them in any office business they may wish to consult him about.

The only other public business that Lord Barham recollects is the king's and cabinet papers, which are of great consequence, and also his waiting on Lord Grenville when sent for. Mr.

¹ The spelling in Rose's MS. is perfectly clear, and he may be supposed to have known his wife's maiden name. *D.N.B.* spells it Dues.

² Henry Edridge, 1769-1821, miniature painter.

³ *Ante*, p. 356.

Thomson will restore the order of Lord Barham's Alphabet when he comes to Teston, and bring with him the king's notes and all papers that Lord Barham may think proper to keep. . . .

[*The rest refers to private concerns.*]

Sir J. T. Duckworth to Lord Barham

Superb : Port Royal, Jamaica.

16th February, 1806.¹

[*Holograph.*]

My Lord,—As one of the first happinesses of this life is to view the prosperity of those who have faithfully served under you, I am convinced your lordship will feel for me to think I have in a great degree been deprived of that first of pleasures. But as my first lieutenant, Mr. Rich. Henry Muddle was serving in the *Acasta*, and hoisted the British colours in the *Impérial*, I have given him an order to act as commander in the *Echo*, removing her captain, Edmund Boger, to act in *Le Brave*; and as that officer was first to be made post under me for 14 months when I was commander-in-chief here, without having it in my power, I shall feel highly obliged for the confirmation of these two officers. As I understand since my arrival here, from Brigadier General Balfour, that he was taken in the *Robert* of Liverpool, whilst under convoy of the *Wolverene*, by the *Regulus* of 74, *Sybel*² and *Président*, large frigates, with the *Surveillante* brig, I hope to get from hence by the 24th, with the *Acasta* for off Cadiz; and as those ships are said to be cruising off the Western Islands, trust I may be so fortunate as to give your lordship a good

¹ *Ante*, p. 380.

² The name is so written, in error for *Cybèle*. Cf. Chevalier, iii. 263.

account of them. As for the rest of my squadron, I feel it will be necessary to send them to England, but I have not been able yet to perfectly decide upon that measure, but I beg your lordship to believe I will do that which appears best for his Majesty's service.

I have the honour to be . . .

J. T. DUCKWORTH.

Sir T. M. Hardy to —

[*Copy sent to Thomson.
Extract.*]

Sampson : Hamoaze.
5th May, 1806.¹

My dear Sir,— . . . I am extremely sorry I had not the pleasure of seeing Mr. Adam, but really I had no idea of leaving London so soon. After I had the pleasure of seeing you I went into the country and did not return till about ten days before I got my appointment.

Our departed friend, Lord Nelson, read Mr. Clerk's works with great attention, and frequently expressed his approbation of them in the fullest manner; he also recommended all the captains to read them with attention, and said that many good hints might be taken from them. He most approved of the attack from to-windward, and considered that breaking through the enemy's line absolutely necessary to obtain a great victory. I have taken some pains in reading Clerk's Tactics, and I have the highest opinion of the ability of the author of that most excellent work. . . .

I have the honour to be, with the greatest regard,

My dear Sir, yours most sincerely,

T. M. HARDY.

¹ *Ante*, p. 356.

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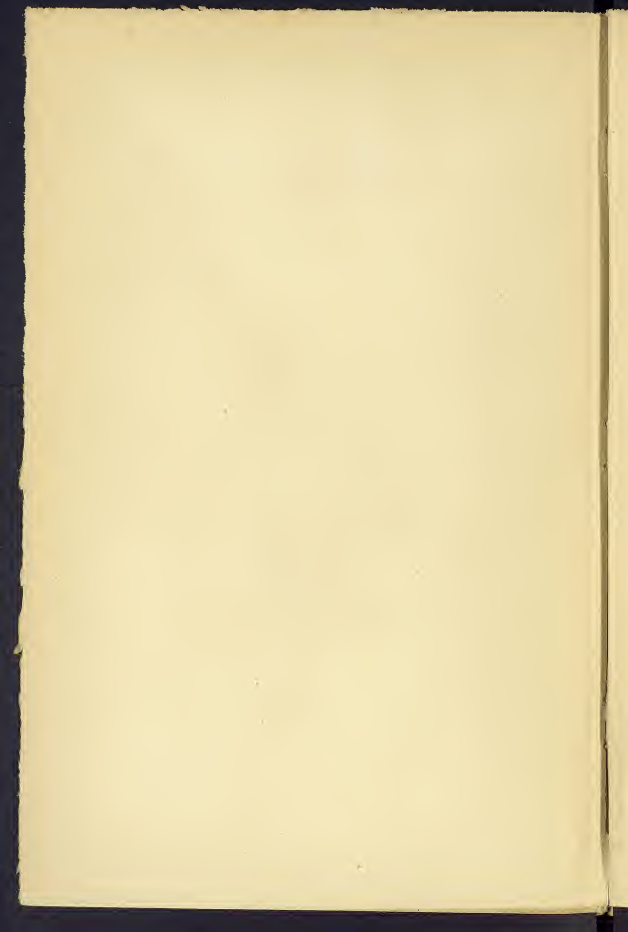
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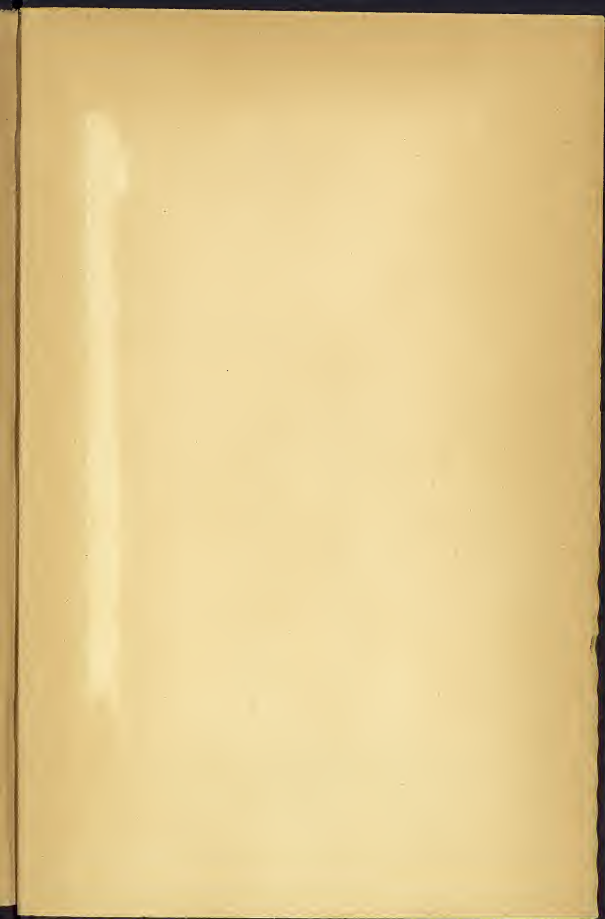
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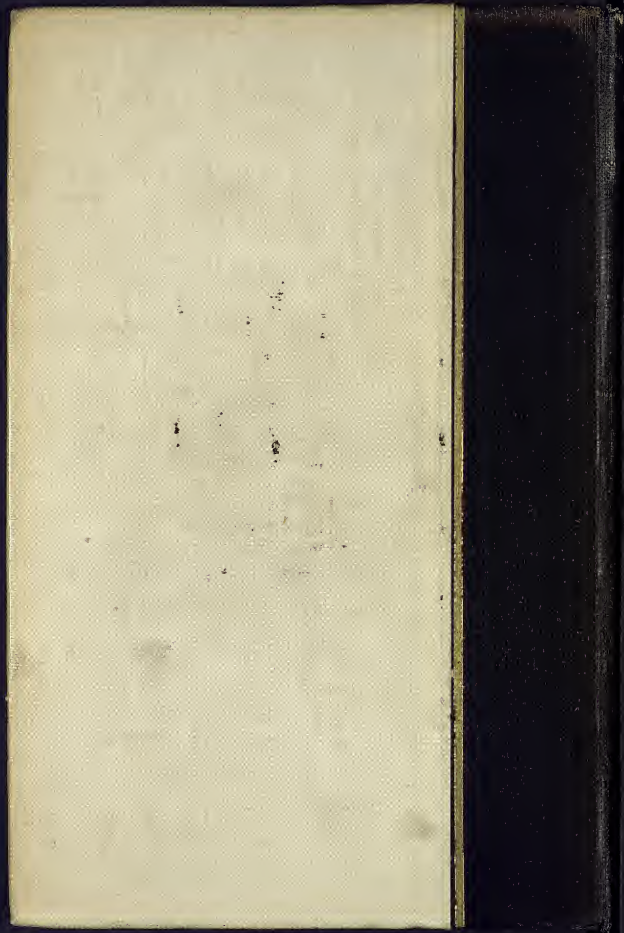
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